Audit and Inventory of Chesapeake Bay Program Website
Request for Applications (RFA)

Deadline: Friday, September 11, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. ET

Introduction:
The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) is a regional partnership consisting of federal, state and local governments, academic institutions and non-governmental organizations. Primarily funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the CBP sets the guidance and policy for restoring the Chesapeake Bay.

The CBP's flagship website, https://www.chesapeakebay.net, has two main purposes. The first, is to serve as the authoritative source of information about the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem, history, issues and restoration effort. The website is designed to educate and inspire users and to encourage positive actions. Second, the website supports the work of the CBP in protecting and restoring the environment through the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.

The CBP Communications Office is staffed by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay through a cooperative agreement and seeks applicants to perform a content inventory for our flagship website ChesapeakeBay.net. The plan should address how you will inventory all the content on the website including text, images, links, documents and applications. The inventory should include details for content such as:

- Unique Content ID.
- Title.
- URL.
- File Format (HTML, PDF, DOC, TXT, etc.)
- Author or Provider.
- Physical location (in the content management system, on the server, etc.)
- Meta Description.
- Meta Keywords.
- Categories/ Tags.
- Dates (created, revised, accessed).

A robust library of documents and publications related to the history of the CBP currently exist in an uncatalogued format on the website. As part of the content inventory and audit, the contractor should develop a plan for organizing these publications and catalogue what is currently exists on the website.

Background:
The purpose of this inventory and audit of chesapeakebay.net is to give us the information we need to conduct informed user research and develop a content strategy for the website.

The primary audiences for chesapeakebay.net include the following:

- **Interested Public:** Our primary audience is the interested public: those who have identified reasons that the Chesapeake Bay is important to them as an individual. Members of the interested public recognize a connection between the values of the Bay and their own personal interests.
    - o **Goals**: Learn about their connection to the ecosystem, the challenges facing the ecosystem and how they can help.
    - o **Needs**: They are looking for information to help them make informed decisions, take action and connect to their local environment.

- **Students:** Students (grades K through undergraduate) are an important subset of the interested public. This group is particularly active in its pursuit of Bay-related information and may be more technologically savvy.
    - o **Goals:** Learn about the ecosystem, its challenges and how they can help.
    - o **Needs:** They are looking for information related to a teacher's assignment or research project.

- **Educators:** Educators are also an important subset of the interested public.
    - o **Goals:** Learn about the ecosystem, its challenges and how they can inspire their students to act. Find resources to aid in their lessons.
    - o **Needs:** They are typically searching for teaching resources such as maps, photos, information and publications.

- **Staff and partners:** Local, state, regional, federal, academic and NGO colleagues actively involved in the Bay Program.
    - o **Goals:** Find materials for meetings and resources/tools for their work.
    - o **Needs:** They need direct and timely access to Bay Program management and process-related information, such as goal team information, meetings calendar, agendas, minutes, draft documents, presentations and ChesapeakeDecisions.

Secondary audiences include:
- **External stakeholders:** Our stakeholder audiences are varied in their needs and technical abilities. Stakeholder groups are the principal implementers of on-the-ground Bay restoration practices and policies and require skill in their action areas. Our web content must respond to their specific needs and provide detailed information, guidance and (possibly) tools that enable them to act.
    - o Community, environmental and watershed organizations.
    - o Local governments (elected officials and professional staff).
    - o Businesses.
    - o Environmental professionals and advocates: People whose boss—or boss' boss—may be part of a Bay Program GIT or workgroup, but they themselves are not directly connected to our work. However, they are the ones verifying that BMPs are correctly installed, promoting BMPs to landowners or working to coordinate interstate fisheries. They need

to know the outcomes of Bay Program work and decisions but are not directly involved themselves.

- **Media:** Media (need current issues, events, news releases, background information, contacts, photos, etc.).

Objectives:
The Alliance is seeking a contractor to perform a comprehensive content inventory and audit of the Chesapeake Bay Program's flagship website, chesapeakebay.net. The contractor should provide recommendations at the conclusion of the inventory and audit that address the following questions:
- What content is on chesapeakebay.net?
- What is our most successful content? *(access to analytics will be provided)*
- What content is suffering from redundant, outdated, tacky (ROT)?
- Does the content fulfill our business and user goals?
- Do any technical issues exist?
- What areas would benefit from user experience research?

The goals of our web content are, as follows:

For our public audiences:
- **Educate and inform:** What is the Chesapeake Bay watershed?
- **Create individual connections:** Why should I care?
- **Push to action:** What can I do to help?

For our internal audiences:
- **Share important information:** Where is the information I need for my meeting? What decisions have been made?
- **Provide guidance on partnership processes and governance:** How does the Chesapeake Bay Program work? How does the Strategy Review System work?
- **Access to library of historical partnership documents.** Where can I find documents related to key decisions and actions of the organization? What reports have been completed that can help understand a timeline of our progress?

Outcomes:
The overall goal of this inventory and audit is to assess the scope and quality of our current content so we may remove redundant content, revise outdated content and create a strategy to keep chesapeakebay.net useful and useable for our users and manageable for our internal team. Assessing the quality of our content may involve looking at readability scores and other methods of testing content.

This inventory and audit will cover the content—text, images and files—on the Chesapeake Bay Program's main website, www.chesapeakebay.net. This will include ChesapeakeDecisions since it is hosted on the site.

It will not cover:
- Subdomains.
- Social media.
- Newsletters.
- Design (unless there are obvious issues on a page).

Deliverables:
The contractor is expected to provide:
- Project schedule and workplan.
- Regular project check-ins.
- Plan for how content will be assessed.
- Evaluation and presentation of audit data.
- Report detailing findings and recommendations.
  - Recommendations should include options for cataloging existing and future publications.

Evaluation Criteria:
The Alliance is seeking to enter into a contractual agreement with an outside company that will become a partner, working alongside the CBP Creative Team to achieve the outcomes laid out in this RFA. We are looking for organizations that are a match with our organizational culture, adhering to our core organizational values: 1. We believe in partnering across sectors and regions to achieve a larger collective impact, 2. We are partners who demonstrate integrity and amplify diverse voices for equitable impact, and 3. We drive with data, promote informed action, and hold ourselves and our partners accountable for measurable impact. Our commitment to an inclusive, equitable, and diverse process can be viewed on our website: Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay Resolution on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

- Responsiveness of the written proposal to the purpose and scope of the project.
- Extensive knowledge and experience in digital/web project management.
- Extensive knowledge and experience of digital web analytics and reporting.
- Extensive knowledge of best practices for search engine optimization (SEO).
- Knowledge of website accessibility standards.
- Ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget.

Deadline for Submission: Proposals must be received via email on or before 5:00 p.m. ET on Friday, September 11, 2020. The subject line should read "Website Audit and Inventory RFA" and should be emailed to Rachel Felver at rfelver@chesapeakebay.net. Please no phone calls.

About the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay: For 49 years, the Alliance has been committed to improving water quality throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed through partnerships across sectors, bringing a diversity of voices to the table, and helping build capacity for action on the ground for cleaner water. With almost five decades of experience, we still believe that the best results come from bringing people together to find common ground and working to put "boots on the ground" in order to bring clean water projects to life. Building partnerships is in our DNA. The Alliance remains highly effective in forming collaborative efforts that successfully support local governments, watershed and conservation

groups, community organizations, residents, and businesses in their efforts to improve water quality in local rivers and streams of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Learn more about the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay at www.allianceforthebay.org.

Budget: Not to exceed $25,000.