

Bidders Questions and Answers Form

RFP Reference:	IPA/RFP/COMMS/001/2026
Questions Due:	10/02/2026
IPA Response Due:	12/02/2026

Question 1:	Over the past 12 months, approximately how many development tickets or improvement requests has your team submitted monthly? What percentage were urgent vs. routine?
Answer:	Assuming that "urgent" means "needs to be resolved within 1-2 business days," across all 12 months of 2025, we submitted an average of 2-4 development tickets or improvement requests per month, with 0-1 being urgent.
Question 2:	Do you have a target number of monthly retainer hours in mind? What range are you considering (10, 20, 40 hours/month)?
Answer:	We are considering a range of 8-12 hours per month.
Question 3:	What has been your experience with the urgency/complexity of both minor patches and major Drupal upgrades? Does your site have a significant volume of custom code that makes routine updates more complex?
Answer:	Our site does contain a significant volume of custom code, so this does often make routine updates complex to implement. For context, we currently do Drupal security updates on a quarterly basis and they have historically taken about 8-12 hours quarterly.
Question 4:	Are there any major website improvement projects or redesign phases anticipated during the contract period that would require additional hours beyond the monthly retainer?
Answer:	No, in 2026 we do not anticipate a major website redesign (we just did one in early 2023), and we expect to cover any website improvements within the monthly retainer.
Question 5:	Are there immediate issues or significant pain points on the site that you would want addressed asap?
Answer:	There are pain points on the website that we would like to address within 2026 (such as improvements to the studies search function on the /our-studies page), but not "ASAP" in terms of these needing to happen immediately.
Question 6:	The RFP mentions interactive data visualizations as "a huge plus." Are there specific data visualization projects on your roadmap? What types of data are you looking to present? Are there current integrations with data visualization platforms such as Tableau?
Answer:	There aren't specific data visualization projects on our 2026 roadmap nor current integrations with Tableau or other data viz platforms on our Drupal site. However, part of the reason why this is mentioned in our RFP is because some of our internal teams at IPA

	ended up in 2025 developing other sites using GitHub and Quarto, which you can see at https://data.poverty-action.org and https://dfs-prices.poverty-action.org , because we do not have these capabilities within our Drupal site. It would be nice in the future to be able to build these kinds of sites within the main poverty-action.org site instead of as separate sites.
Question 7:	Do you currently have a development partner that manages the website? If so, would there be a transition/knowledge transfer period needed?
Answer:	While the IPA Communications team is the primary manager of the IPA website, we do currently partner with an external web development agency whose monthly web development and maintenance retainer contract with us ends on March 31. We would indeed build in time for a transition/knowledge transfer and handover period if needed.
Question 8:	Assuming you are looking to change development partners, what were/are some of the main challenges with the current partner that you would want alleviated with the new partner?
Answer:	We are interested in evaluating our options to ensure we are continuing to partner with the web development firm that provides the best value to meet our budget and needs.
Question 9:	Who will be the primary stakeholder and day-to-day contact from the IPA Communications team? Will there be multiple primary stakeholders across other departments?
Answer:	The primary day-to-day contact from the IPA Communications team will be the Senior Communications Manager. She acts as an internal project manager who collects and consolidates feedback from other colleagues and teams, so that all communication will come through her.
Question 10:	Beyond business hours availability, what are your preferred communication channels (Slack, email, project management tools)? Do you use a ticketing system? Would you be comfortable using our project management system (Jira/Confluence)?
Answer:	We currently use Basecamp and email, but we are open to other project management systems such as Jira/Confluence.
Question 11:	Can you clarify what constitutes a "website emergency" beyond outages? What scenarios have required 3-6 hour response in the past?
Answer:	99.9% of the time, a "website emergency" is indeed an outage where the site is down. The only other time we had an emergency that was not an outage was when thousands of Russian spambots attacked our website in April 2020, but we took measures to secure the site then and thankfully nothing like that has happened since.
Question 12:	Are there expectations for after-hours or weekend emergency support? If so, how should that be structured in pricing?
Answer:	No, we expect that the vendor/partner will work the same business hours as we do, 9am-5pm EST.
Question 13:	You mentioned unused hours rolling over month-to-month. Is there a cap on accumulated hours or an "expires after X months" policy you envision?
Answer:	We would be open to a cap on accumulated hours or an "expires after X months" policy, such as a max of 50 hours rollover.

Question 14:	Do you have an allocated budget range for this work? This helps us propose a retainer structure that aligns with your financial planning.
Answer:	We have allocated up to \$10-15K per year.
Question 15:	For work exceeding monthly retainer hours, what is your preferred process for authorizing additional budget?
Answer:	Our preferred process is for an estimate for any overage hours to be shared for written approval/authorization via email or via the vendor's preferred project management tool.
Question 16:	Beyond the deliverables outlined, how will you measure the success of this partnership? Are there specific KPIs or performance indicators you'll track?
Answer:	We will measure the success of this partnership by whether requests are completed on time and on budget, with a high quality of workmanship and excellent project management/communication.
Question 17:	To help us assess the maintenance needs and provide an accurate proposal, could you share the following reports from the current Drupal build? (You simply copy the content of the page and paste it into an Excel document) a. The "Field list" report. This report includes the content types, entities, and all fields. You can access it from https://poverty-action.org/admin/reports/fields If there are multiple pages, please copy the content of all pages b. The "Available updates" report. This report includes the versions, names, and available updates for all modules in the site. You can access it from https://poverty-action.org/admin/reports/update c. The "Status report". This report highlights the site status, exact PHP version, and Drupal version. You can access it from https://poverty-action.org/admin/reports/status
Answer:	Please see an Excel spreadsheet here – access will be granted upon request. Please note that our current website development vendor (with whom our contract ends on March 31) will implement Drupal security updates for the site before March 31.
Question 18:	Are there any third-party system integrations with the current website that we should be aware of for maintenance purposes?
Answer:	The website is integrated with Google Analytics, as well as GTranslate (https://gtranslate.io/) to support Spanish and French translations of webpages. There is also a separate smaller website, https://www.povertyindex.org , that IPA also manages, that has an integration with Brevo (https://www.brevo.com) to support the email verification process for user registration at https://www.povertyindex.org/user/register .
Question 19:	Was the current website built internally or by an external vendor?
Answer:	It was built by an external vendor in early 2023, based off a Drupal architecture built internally (by staff who are no longer with IPA) in or around 2015.
Question 20:	Is there an incumbent vendor currently providing ongoing maintenance, and are they expected to bid on this RFP?
Answer:	Yes, there is an incumbent vendor currently providing ongoing maintenance, and yes, they are expected to bid on this RFP.

Question 21:	How many hours per month do you estimate are needed for website support and maintenance based on your current experience?
Answer:	About 8-12 hours per month
Question 22:	What prompted the decision to issue this RFP — is the current arrangement ending, or are there specific gaps you are looking to address?
Answer:	We are auditing all of our communications and website vendors to ensure we are still receiving the best value for our budget and needs.
Question 23:	Approximately how many support and maintenance requests have been recorded over the last 12 months?
Answer:	About 2-4 requests per month
Question 24:	Could you provide approximate traffic and database sizing information, such as average monthly pageviews and the website database and files size in GB? This helps us understand the hosting and performance monitoring requirements.
Answer:	In the past 6 months, the poverty-action.org site has had about 100,000 monthly pageviews. According to our hosting records, the site's code is 458.6 MB, database is 205.4 MB, and files are 12.5 GB.
Question 25:	Is there a budget cap or consideration? What is the allocated annual budget for this engagement?
Answer:	We have allocated up to \$10-15K per year.
Question 26:	The RFP mentions data visualization experience as a plus. Are there specific data visualization projects you anticipate needing support with in the coming year?
Answer:	At this time, there aren't specific data visualization projects planned for the coming year. However, part of the reason why this is mentioned in our RFP is because some of our internal teams at IPA ended up in 2025 developing other sites using GitHub and Quarto, which you can see at https://data.poverty-action.org and https://dfs-prices.poverty-action.org , because we do not have these capabilities within our Drupal site. It would be nice in the future to be able to build these kinds of sites within the main poverty-action.org site instead of as separate sites.
Question 27:	The RFP title references “Drupal 10/Acquia Platform,” and Section 9.1 states the website is hosted on a “Drupal content management system (CMS) and Acquia server.” However, we have observed that poverty-action.org currently appears to be hosted on Pantheon, not Acquia. Could you clarify the current hosting arrangement? Is there a planned migration from Pantheon to Acquia, and if so, should bidders include this migration in their proposal scope and pricing?
Answer:	Yes, apologies for the confusion - while the RFP mainly involves the https://poverty-action.org website, which is hosted on Pantheon and not Acquia, a smaller, secondary purpose of the RFP is for website maintenance of the much smaller https://povertyindex.org website, which IPA also manages and is indeed hosted on Acquia. The povertyindex.org site does not require any support other than occasional

	Acquia patches if they arise, as the povertyindex.org site has over the past 12 months been managed by IPA staff.
Question 28:	What are the top pain points or recurring issues you are currently experiencing with the website that this engagement should prioritize? For example, are there performance issues, accessibility gaps, content workflow bottlenecks, or design inconsistencies?
Answer:	The top pain point we would like to resolve within 2026 are issues with the display and filters for the /our-studies page. Another pain point on our "wish list," which is less of a priority but would be a "nice to have," is reducing the too-large photo sizing across our site, especially for headshot photos for staff such as on the /people/staff page, but also for hero images and banners such as on the /what-we-do page.
Question 29:	How many content editors/authors currently manage the website, and what does the content publishing workflow look like (e.g., draft, review, publish)? Are there any specific content moderation or approval processes in place?
Answer:	There are currently 6 active content editors for the website, including one administrator. The IPA Communications and Human Resources teams self-manage their content publishing workflow - we did not require any support for content editing in 2025 and do not anticipate needing any content editing support in 2026.
Question 30:	Does the IPA website currently support or plan to support multiple languages? If multilingual content is in scope, what languages are required, and are you currently using any translation management tools or external translation services?
Answer:	Yes, the IPA website is integrated with GTranslate (https://gtranslate.io/) to support Spanish and French translations of webpages. We manage all translations internally within the IPA Communications team and do not anticipate needing external support for this in 2026.
Question 31:	How many custom modules are currently used on the site?
Answer:	There is 1 custom module (not currently in use, but which we plan to use again in Q4 2026) that we used in December 2025 to add a GoFundMe/Classy donation form pop-up to the homepage of our website during end-of-year fundraising season.
Question 32:	Are there any integrations with external systems?
Answer:	The website is integrated with Google Analytics, as well as GTranslate (https://gtranslate.io/) to support Spanish and French translations of webpages. There is also a separate smaller website, https://www.povertyindex.org , that IPA also manages, that has an integration with Brevo (https://www.brevo.com) to support the email verification process for user registration at https://www.povertyindex.org/user/register .
Question 33:	Is the website using a fully custom theme, or is it built on a base theme?
Answer:	The website is built on a custom theme that was set up by a design and branding agency that redesigned our website between late 2022 and early 2023. We are unsure if they built on an available base theme or built a fully custom theme.
Question 34:	Do you use any custom workflows for content editors (moderation, approvals, etc)?
Answer:	We technically have 4 stages within a custom workflow set up on our site - Draft, Unpublished, Published, and Archived - but in practice, we only use the 2 standard stages of Unpublished and Published.

Question 35:	Are there any performance concerns we should be aware of (slow pages, heavy views, a large media library)?
Answer:	We don't have specific performance concerns at this time, though we have heard anecdotally that sometimes our site is slower to load in countries/regions that have lower/less reliable internet connectivity and bandwidth, such as some of the countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America where we have country offices. So for example, when uploading PDFs to our website, we try to keep them to a maximum of 5MB file size.
Question 36:	What are your current biggest pain points with the website (technical, UX, performance, editor experience)?
Answer:	The top pain point we would like to resolve within 2026 are issues with the display and filters for the /our-studies page. Another pain point on our "wish list," which is less of a priority but would be a "nice to have," is reducing the too-large photo sizing across our site, especially for headshot photos for staff such as on the /people/staff page, but also for hero images and banners such as on the /what-we-do page.
Question 37:	Are there specific UX or UI improvements already identified for the next 6–12 months?
Answer:	UI-wise, in addition to the too-large photos, a lot of the font sizes for titles and headings are too large.
Question 38:	Are there any strategic goals (new audiences, new content types, accessibility improvements, or possible redesign considerations) that could influence development needs?
Answer:	In Q2 2026, we would like to restructure the "Partner with Us" section of our website to better represent the full portfolio of IPA's services (e.g., perhaps by categorizing this section by types of services rather than by audience as it is now), so we would love a thought partner for the UI and UX of this.
Question 39:	Do you have an initial preference for a monthly retainer range (for example, 20–30, 40, or 60 hours)?
Answer:	We are considering a range of 8-12 hours per month.
Question 40:	On average, how often are design needed by month?
Answer:	We have about 2-4 website requests per month, which are usually related to improving both the user interface/visual design and user experience of a specific part of our site.
Question 41:	Scale-wise, are those design needs component based or larger efforts?
Answer:	They are usually component-based, focused on a specific content block, field, taxonomy item, paragraph, etc.

END