



Canadian Research
Knowledge Network
Réseau canadien
de documentation
pour la recherche

Request for Proposals

Website development services for: [Canadian Research Knowledge Network](https://crkn-rcdr.ca)

1. About CRKN

The Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) is a national, not-for-profit network with 88 member institutions (including universities, libraries, and research institutions), that licenses scholarly content, promotes open access, and preserves Canada's documentary heritage.

Acting as a united voice, CRKN negotiates with publishers on behalf of our members to secure equitable, cost-effective access to global research, while advancing open access and building shared digital research infrastructure. Together, CRKN members own and sustain the Canadiana collections and research infrastructure, ensuring that Canada's documentary heritage is preserved and openly accessible for future generations. Rooted in collaboration and responsibility, CRKN connects Canada's libraries and research institutions to create a more open, sustainable, and inclusive knowledge ecosystem.

Through its three core programs—Licensing and Open Access, Canadiana, and Persistent Identifiers—CRKN supports trusted, long-term access to research and historical content across Canada.

About the CRKN website

The CRKN website is a key resource for our members and provides information and updates for the wider audience. Members visit the website for a specific need, often through a direct link, and sometimes using their member login to access certain pages. Other users may need more guidance to get to what they need, whether it's to go to one of the programs' sections or more general CRKN content. The homepage underwent a redesign in 2025 to help address these two different user experiences, making it easier to navigate and find information and highlighting our core programs and services.

The website's CMS is Drupal, which supports our needs for a secure website with a vast number of content pages and organized, structured backend. The website is managed by CRKN's Engagement team, with various editing responsibilities across teams to ensure content is updated in a timely and efficient manner.

CRKN also runs two annual conference-style events that are supported by the website through conference subsites. These subsites are crucial to these events, hosting key information and resources for attendees.

As a national organization, CRKN offers a fully bilingual website, with the option to switch between English and French on all pages.

2. Scope of Work

CRKN is requesting proposals from qualified, full-service website development agencies who can provide ongoing support, maintenance, and strategic enhancement projects for the website: crkn-rcdr.ca. This work is focused solely on the corporate website and does not include CRKN's Canadiana website. These services would be engaged on an ongoing basis with the expectation that CRKN and the agency would sign an agreement annually, outlining the

scope of work for that year and the pricing, with the option for adding enhancement projects/additional services as add-ons throughout the year.

It is expected that the selected agency will provide the following services:

Support

- Provide the ongoing Drupal maintenance and support services the website needs to ensure it is secure, functioning well for both editors and users, and operating as intended.
- Respond to all technical and troubleshooting requests in a timely manner. Investigate issues with functionality in an immediate timeframe, while providing plans for resolution for less critical requests and inquiries.
- Manage and monitor the overall administration and configuration of the CMS, communicating with the CRKN Engagement team on matters that arise with installation, integrations, and system-related matters.

Updates and Solutions

- Notify CRKN's engagement team of any necessary updates for the upcoming year and develop mutually agreeable schedule for performing the updates.
- In lead-up to Drupal updates, provide proactive and customized support to the CRKN Engagement team to ensure quality assurance, testing, training (if applicable), and information sharing can be handled prior to the release of changes to the website.
- Using expert Drupal knowledge and experience, offer recommendations to the CRKN Engagement team when experiencing any challenges or roadblocks with editing. Refer to existing Drupal modules or provide suggestions for new modules that include information on additional costs.

Strategic Enhancement Projects

- Give expert advice based on best practices to CRKN's Engagement team on specific questions that arise. Help provide this strategic support to ensure that the website keeps pace with industry standards and meets the needs of its users.
- Develop projects to update and enhance website design and functionality.

3. Technical Requirements

The CRKN website is on **Drupal 10** and requires an agency that is fully equipped to provide long-term and expert support on this specific CMS.

All new development work for CRKN's website should comply with accessibility standards. It is mandatory that the agency is fully versed in WCAG 2.0 Level AA; however a higher standard would be considered an asset.

This is a fully bilingual website and the agency will ensure that both the English and French sides of the website are fully supported. While CRKN produces all content in both languages, the Engagement team works primarily in English.

The website is hosted through Pantheon, so it is expected the agency is prepared to work with this hosting service provider.

4. Proposal Requirements

Proposals are required to be in PDF format and cannot exceed 12 pages. The following information is required in the proposal:

Overview and Team

- Introduction to the agency including a company profile
- Brief introduction of staff who would be involved in the work including job titles and responsibilities

Approach

- Description of how the agency works with its clients and manages support and maintenance
- Based on the information in the Scope of Work section, a plan outlining how the agency would work with CRKN including timelines

Previous work and samples

- Three to five samples of similar work that include detailed descriptions of the services provided and the results or impact they have had
- Contact information for three previous clients who can speak to the quality of the bidder's services.

Costs

Please provide information on pricing for:

- Support requests, including hourly rate or packages
- Implementation of basic Drupal updates and maintenance
- Upgrading site from Drupal 10 to Drupal 11
- Hourly rate or other package pricing for enhancement projects

5. Timeline

This RFP was issued on July 15, 2026. The deadline to submit a proposal is August 21, 2026. Interviews with bidders who score high will be held in September or early October followed by reaching out to previous clients. The successful bidder will be selected and notified shortly after this.

It is expected that the successful agency will begin work on January 1, 2027.

6. Instructions

Questions can be sent to: Claire Duncan, Senior Manager, Strategy and Engagement at cduncan@crkn.ca.

Proposals should be submitted in PDF by email to Claire Duncan, Senior Manager, Strategy and Engagement at cduncan@crkn.ca and cc'd to engagement@crkn.ca by **Friday, August 21, 2026 at 5 pm ET**.

7. Evaluation

Selection criteria:

- Demonstrated understanding of CRKN website's objectives.
- Proficiency in Drupal CMS including recognized certification and developer skills and training within the team.
- Demonstrated ability to provide full-service website development services to support the scope of work in this RFP.
- Commitment to exceptional client relations, including effective project management and communication practices.

- Demonstrated knowledge of and adherence to accessibility standards.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and adherence to cybersecurity best practices, including secure application development practices, SSL/TLS certificate management, vulnerability assessment and remediation, security monitoring, logging, and incident response, and regular security patching and updates.
- Experience working with not-for-profits, library, and/or academic sectors including working on websites similar in nature (e.g. bilingual, member log-in).
- Costs/schedule of pricing.

Process:

The request for proposals will be open for approximately six weeks. Interested bidders can submit questions during this period. All proposals that are submitted by the deadline will be reviewed. The initial review will take approximately one week. The top bidders that score high according to the selection criteria will be contacted to have an interview with members of the CRKN staff. It is expected that these interviews will be held in September or early October. After these interviews take place, CRKN will reach out to previous clients using the contact information provided in the proposal. A decision will be made and the successful bidder will be notified.