



## Union Square Alliance Website RFP Questions & Answers

- Is the project expected to be delivered fully remotely, or would any on-site presence in San Francisco be required?
  - *We plan to hold final interviews in person at our San Francisco office.*
- Do you have any preference for U.S.-based teams, or are offshore/remote teams also considered?
  - *Preference for U.S. based vendors*
- [Ref: Introduction – Foundation Website] The RFP mentions redesigning both the primary Alliance website and the Union Square Foundation website and "connecting them seamlessly." Should these be two separate websites (multisite) sharing a design system, or one unified website with a Foundation section? Does the Foundation site have its own domain?
  - *One unified website with a Foundation section*
- [Ref: Scope – Content Migration] Approximately how many business directory listings currently exist, and how many pages/posts of content (news, events, etc.) would need to be migrated?
  - *Due to inconsistent data upkeep in the past, we do not have a confirmed number of active business listings. As part of this project, we are looking for a vendor to help us implement a workflow for archiving inactive businesses and improving our overall data hygiene.*
- [Ref: Project Objectives – Salesforce Directory] The RFP states "Use of Salesforce to drive directory." Does the Alliance currently have a Salesforce instance with structured business data, and is there an existing API/integration, or would this need to be built from scratch? Can you share the Salesforce edition in use?
  - *We are currently using Enterprise Edition.*
- [Ref: Scope – Event Calendar Tools] Which event calendar platform is currently in use or preferred? Should the CMS manage events natively, or is there an external platform (e.g., Eventbrite, Localist) that should serve as the source of truth?
  - *We employ VibeMap to populate our events calendar through Wordpress. We would need an integration that could synch VibeMap to our website.*

- Content & Design Readiness[Ref: Scope – Content Migration / New Content] The RFP lists "Support for new content creation" as optional. Should vendors assume all page copy, photography, and video assets will be provided by the Alliance before the design phase, or is content creation expected as part of the project scope?
  - ***We are currently on Salesforce Enterprise Edition. Due to inconsistent data upkeep in the past, we do not have a confirmed number of active business listings. As part of this project, we are looking for a vendor to help us implement a workflow for archiving inactive businesses and improving our overall data hygiene.***
- [Ref: Background – Brand Identity] Are finalized brand guidelines (logo files, color palette, typography, photography style) available and ready to share with the selected vendor at project kickoff?
  - ***Yes, we will share a style guide with the selected vendor.***
- [Ref: Budget / Optional Ongoing Support] Does the stated \$100,000–\$150,000 budget cover only the redesign and launch, or does it also include the first year of ongoing maintenance and hosting?
  - ***We are leaving it up to the vendors to propose both.***
- [Ref: Timeline – Target Launch Q4 2026] The RFP targets launch before holiday season. Is there a hard date (e.g., November 1 before Black Friday), or is "before end of Q4" acceptable?
  - ***Ideally by November 1, 2026***
- [Ref: Proposal Requirements – Portfolio] The RFP requests 3–5 relevant BID/CBD or destination marketing website examples. Would the Alliance also consider nonprofit organization websites with comparable scope as relevant portfolio references, even if they are not specifically BID/CBD organizations?
  - ***Yes. Preference will be given to those with BID/CBD or destination marketing website examples.***
- Is new copywriting expected from the chosen partner, or will the Alliance provide updated content for migration?
  - ***Copywriting will be expected from the chosen partner, to be reviewed by the Alliance.***

- What event calendar tool is currently in use, or is the selection of a new platform part of this scope?
  - ***We employ VibeMap to populate our events calendar through Wordpress. We would need an integration that could synch VibeMap to our website.***
- Are existing photography and visual assets available and approved for use in the redesign?
  - ***Yes***
- Who will serve as the primary decision maker and day-to-day project lead on the Alliance's side?
  - ***Hollie Chiao, Marketing & Communications Associate***
- Is the requirement for Salesforce as your directory's database firm?
  - ***Yes***
- You mention a preference for a widely-used CMS. Our CMS is proprietary, but it is built on open-source technology (Mongo DB, Node.js, etc), and is the most widely used CMS amongst DMOs and TBIDs. It's a true enterprise-grade platform and would meet all of the other requirements in your RFP. Would this be an acceptable option to propose?
  - ***Please propose freely based on your expertise/experience. We need to be cognizant of an increase in users coming onto the website during high traffic times (e.g. Winter Walk, Tulip Day, etc.). We also may want to increase the number of integrations in the future to have more flexibility and reduce the amount of manual employee input. Staff usability is a key pain point. As the point of contact for maintaining the website, we need the ability to make changes on demand. This could be as simple as a word, logo, etc. Perhaps an admin panel/sandbox environment to test changes before pushing the changes live.***
- What is driving the June 15<sup>th</sup> start date? Would your team be open to starting earlier if contract the RFP process, contracting, etc was finished faster than expected?
  - ***The Board of Directors must approve the project during their meeting on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Project can start anytime after this date if contract is finalized.***

- How will you internally define success for this project six months after launch? What are your main KPIs?
  - ***Increased visitation, event engagement, business directory usage, stakeholder engagement, ease of use by staff***
- Are there key seasonal moments or campaigns (holidays, events, tourism peaks) that should drive the site's structure?
  - ***Holidays in Union Square, Winter Walk, Tulip Day***
- The RFP references the existing brand identity. Will the Alliance provide brand guidelines, and if so, what do the guidelines cover? Will you expect your partner to evolve or extend the brand for digital uses within this project?
  - ***Yes***
- Are both the Union Square Alliance website and the Union Square Foundation websites in scope? If yes, will they remain separate sites or unified into a single CMS instance?
  - ***Unified***
- Can you provide more information on the requirements for integrating Salesforce for the directory? Is Salesforce in use currently to populate the Explore section of the current website?
  - ***We have a maintained salesforce CRM with all data needed to populate the website. We will provide what's needed for the salesforce integration when needed.***
- Other than Salesforce and Mailchimp, what other third-party tool integrations are required?
  - ***VibeMap***
- Are you seeking to contract managed hosting separately from your agency partner?
  - ***We are open to proposals for both.***
- How many Alliance staff members would need CMS training after launch?
  - ***4***
- Our team is Minneapolis-based and works with clients nationally via video and collaborative tools. Can you share whether the evaluation committee has any preference for Bay Area-based firms?
  - ***No preference for Bay Area-based firms.***
- Do you have any designs and logos available for the redesign?
  - ***Yes***

- What is the most important feature that would be needed for this project?
  - ***Offer clear pathways for key audiences—residents, visitors, workers, merchants, and property owners—to access relevant information efficiently***
- What’s the current state of your content? Do you anticipate most of it being reused, or will there be a need for more significant rewriting and restructuring?
  - ***For copywriting, we anticipate 60% reuse, and 40% rewriting/restructuring.***
- For events and the business directory, are there any requirements around submissions, approvals, or moderation workflows? We typically include these systems in our builds and want to make sure we align with how your team prefers to manage them.
  - ***We would like to review and approve event submissions made by the public before they appear on our website. The business directory will need to align with our Salesforce to display accurate, up-to-date information.***
- Who will be responsible for ongoing content governance across the Alliance and Foundation sites, and are there workflows or approval processes we should account for in the CMS design?
  - ***Hollie Chiao, Marketing & Communications Associate***
- Are there any planned updates or evolutions to the Union Square brand identity that should be incorporated into the redesign?
  - ***Not at this time.***
- Would the Alliance be interested in exploring personalized or audience-specific experiences (e.g., tailored content for visitors vs. merchants) as part of this initiative or future roadmap?
  - ***Yes***
- How does the Alliance envision the relationship post-launch? Are you seeking a long-term strategic partner for ongoing optimization, or primarily a project-based engagement?
  - ***We are interested in long-term partnerships but are open to all proposals.***
- Are you open to including forward-looking capabilities, such as enhanced interactive mapping, AI-assisted visitor planning, or improved storytelling features, if they align with the budget and timeline?
  - ***Yes***

- What CMS and hosting platform are currently in use for both the primary Alliance website and the Foundation site, and are there any constraints or preferences based on that existing stack?
  - ***The Alliance website is currently on Wordpress. The foundation website is currently on Squarespace.***
- **Salesforce Integration:** Should the integration support bi-directional data exchange (both pushing and pulling data), or would a one-way synchronization from Salesforce to the website for the business directory be sufficient?
  - ***We're open to suggestions on what is the most efficient. We want our website to be the most up-to-date, accurate resource for our team and also the public to use.***
- **Events Calendar:** Do you require synchronization with external platforms (such as Google Calendar, Eventbrite, or Facebook Events), or will events be managed manually through the CMS?
  - ***We employ VibeMap to populate our events calendar through Wordpress. We would need an integration that could synch VibeMap to our website.***
- How frequently does your team update content (events, listings, announcements), and what are the main challenges with the current CMS workflow?
  - ***Once per month. The main challenge is that once we make changes to the main website, we need to contact a web developer for them to clear the cache, an oftentimes wait half a day before changes are made.***
- Has any prior community/stakeholder engagement been completed that applies to this project?
  - ***No. The review and selection committee will be formed of stakeholders, board and staff members.***
- **CMS Preferences** – While the RFP notes WordPress, Drupal, or Webflow as examples, does the Alliance have a strong preference among these platforms, or should vendors propose freely based on scalability, integrations, and staff usability?
  - ***We're open to suggestions on what is the most efficient. We want our website to be the most up-to-date, accurate resource for our team and for the public to use.***

- **Hosting Responsibilities** – The RFP indicates a preference for managed hosting (e.g., WPEngine, Pantheon, Webflow Enterprise). Should vendors include hosting setup and configuration in their proposals, or will the Alliance contract directly with a hosting provider once the site is launched?
  - *We are open to all proposals.*
- **Evaluation Priorities** – Among the listed criteria (experience, approach, design capabilities, accessibility, SEO, cost, timeline), are there specific factors that will carry more weight in the award decision?
  - *Experience with destination websites*
  - *Design capabilities*
  - *Cost*
  - *Staff accessibility*
  - *Timeline*
  - *SEO*
- Donation software - I don't see any donation software such as Qgiv, FundraiseUp, etc. Is that something you'd be interested in including?
  - *Yes*
- Event registration- I see Eventbrite for the luncheon- would you like an integrated software solution?
  - *Yes*
  -
- will this page be migrated? <https://visitunionsquaresf.com/do-business-here>
  - *Yes*
- Could you share the current monthly traffic levels for <https://visitunionsquaresf.com/> and <https://www.unionsquarefoundation.org/>?
  - *For visitunionsquaresf.com, March saw ~26,000 visits*
  - *For unionsquarefoundation.org, March saw ~317 visits*
  - *Once we take a page down from the website after a campaign has completed, we can no longer access the statistics on Google Analytics.*