

# MUSEUM OF THE HOME

## Museum of the Home Website Design & Development Request for Proposal (RFP)

Issue Date: 25 April 2024

Response Due Date: 14 May 2024

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# 1. Overview

## 1.1 Intro to Project

Museum of the Home is issuing this Request For Proposal (RFP), seeking a qualified and experienced website design and development firm to provide end-to-end website redevelopment and redesign that prioritises accessibility, mobile-first audiences and our online user experience.

The purpose of this RFP process is to fairly evaluate prospective partners and identify the best agency contractor for the project.

We are seeking a firm to help Museum of the Home with the following:

- website redesign
- website redevelopment in new CMS
- integration of ticketing
- audience analytics and user journey mapping
- training and support

This brief will specify the Scope and Overall Design & Summary Requirements to provide more detail.

Our budget is £60,000 to £80,000 for the website redevelopment - encompassing discovery, development, testing, and implementation of software or hardware required based on technical scoping phase. It also includes full training for relevant staff members in the solution and the CMS.

The Head of Communications at Museum of the Home will be project lead. A team composed of the Marketing & Communications team, Director: Operations and Finance, and a Project Manager will be the primary points of contact on the project.

## 1.2 Organisation Background

At Museum of the Home we reveal stories of home life, past, present and future to spark empathy, debate and understanding. Our work is driven by the understanding that home is universally relevant but deeply personal and that everyone should be able to relate to content in the Museum - in both our physical and digital spaces. Our vision is to inspire everyone to explore the meaning of home through our exhibitions, displays, programming and online content. No other museum in the country specialises in this particular aspect of our national heritage.

Our galleries reveal objects, artworks, images and personal testimonies to encourage and challenge different ways of thinking about domestic life today. What is it like to be a property guardian? How does being a young carer affect your experience of home? How

do you create home in a new town or country? What do you display on your shelves and what does this say about you? In keeping with our vision, these stories **reveal and rethink the ways we live, to help us live better together.**

Co-curation and partnership lie at the heart of our work in the Museum. Working in this way has ensured the content in our galleries and programming gives a voice to those who are typically under-represented or marginalised in museum settings and is allowing the Museum to represent more diverse experiences of home across time and place. All our programmes emphasise the agency of the participants in the creation of content, with young people playing an integral part in the creative process.

Our latest project (Real Rooms Project - [read more](#)) embraces co-curation with our community partners and centres lived experiences through the redevelopment of our Rooms Through Time. This will bring seven new period rooms to the Museum's permanent galleries that reflect the interconnected histories of our multicultural East London community.

Museum of the Home is housed in 300-year-old almshouses in Hoxton. Previously the Geffrye Museum, we underwent a major redevelopment and reopened as Museum of the Home in 2021.

### 1.3 Strategy

From 2023 to 2028 we are focusing on four main areas:

1. Building Audiences and Reach - Across all of our teams, we are dedicated to building audiences and reach - better understanding our visitors and growing content that is personal, powerful and reflective of the diversity of modern London.
2. Living Better Together - We are delivering on our ambition to live better together. Our pioneering Campaign for Change - working in partnership with front-line charities to make a difference on issues affecting the ways we live - aims to tackle hunger and create belonging.
3. Climate Active - Climate action is taking a primary role in the Museum's vision. We commit to being carbon neutral by 2040 - getting our own house in order and inspiring audiences to make sustainable choices at home.
4. Future Ready - We're focused on being future ready - streamlining fundraising into clear and engaging programmes and growing our commercial income stands - from hires of our wonderful spaces, indoors and out, to a thriving café and a values-driven retail offer that is both profitable and plays a key role in the visitor experience.

As we build our local audiences to power our global reach, the website will help us to stay connected with audiences, increasing website engagement and online visitors.

We will analyse new and existing user data with the selected agency to improve audience segmentation and online visitor experience. Our digital content will be reinterpreted to strengthen the brand, keeping bespoke audience experience at the centre. We aim to launch the new Museum website by April 2025.

## 1.4 Current State

Museum of the Home's main website runs on Umbraco 8.18.12 and was last updated to this version in 2023. The current state and requirements of a new website have been gauged through stakeholder consultation, including:

- Internal stakeholder research on the current CMS and requirements, particularly with Communications team responsible for CMS and website updates. Concerns with flexibility and capability of Umbraco.
- Internal and external stakeholder research indicates weaknesses in content quantity, use of image and video, and dated content/mediums from closure and COVID period.
- Assessment and exploration of the Museum's latest audience data, including age, demographics and behaviours.
- Vendor research and budgeting with web development professionals and experienced digital product managers.

## Feedback

Museum of the Home holds data on in-person visitors, website visitors and visitor feedback, but is limited in data on digital audiences, in particular user journeys. A discovery period will be required including user journey mapping with a focus on digital audience data and behaviours.

Following a redesign and relaunch of the Museum of the Home website in 2021, our brand designers [DNCO](#) continue to consult on our brand and visitors' experiences of the Museum from the beginning of their user journey, commencing online.

Alongside [The Audience Agency](#), DNCO can be available should further research and data be required.

The latest feedback (March 2024) from internal stakeholders - including back-of-house staff, front-of-house/visitor-facing staff, and our Leadership team - flagged various issues with our existing website. This feedback also reflects organisational and internal communication challenges, which are under improvement with the Head of Communications.

Indications from internal departments suggest challenges with:

- CMS
- Navigation
- Accessibility
- Content

Please see [3.2 Pain Points](#) for more detail.

## 2. Objectives & Scope

### 2.1 New Website Objectives

**The primary objectives of our new website are to:**

- A) Website engagement: Increase website usage and engagement - measured by website visitor numbers, view time and engagement rate.
- B) Digital Content: Deliver a meaningful and suitable experience of our digital content for our audiences, including schools, families and general visitors - measured by WCAG 2.2 compliance and content digitisation projects which will see reinterpreted, multimedia content available on the website.

### Content strategy alignment

Museum of the Home has a unique identity:

- We are a forward-thinking, diverse, and youthful museum.
- We utilise diverse storytelling.
- We disrupt the traditional museum model through our programming and community focus.

The Museum's content strategy across our digital and print marketing channels aim to:

- Represent the Museum as a place to debate the many meanings of home.
- Strengthen our brand across our owned digital channels.
- Demonstrate how the museum disrupts the traditional model, promoting our programmes and events.
- Engage audiences differently on various platforms, promoting our staff as thought leaders in their respective fields.

To deliver our digital content objective, a full content audit is expected. New content will be streamlined and created with external content creators. However, a selection of content to remain on the website or go through reinterpretation will be audience and user-focused. It will be based on the identified user journeys and audience research.

Our full content strategy will be made available to the selected vendor.

### Accessibility

The selected vendor will ensure all users have the same quality of experience - though not the same experience - regardless of their access needs. This must include barriers to access due to physical disability or neurodivergent conditions.

We follow WCAG guidelines (ideally AA or AAA) - this should be part of design, development and content considerations.

Further suggestions on web accessibility features and scoping within the project budget, and where suitable to our users, would be beneficial.

## 2.2 Audience

Visitor numbers, both at the physical Museum site and across our digital platforms, have been growing to exceed preclosure levels, and there have been some key areas of engagement, notably with audiences aged 21 to 30, families with young children, and East and Southeast Asian audiences. Both new and returning visitors are responding with enthusiasm to the more inclusive stories of home evident in our galleries. We are committed to bringing established audiences with us as their Museum continues to change and develop in line with expanding notions of home and home life.

The website will contain information that applies to a variety of different audiences. The website structure, organisation, visual language and navigational architecture should therefore consider these audience groups. Preliminary user research has indicated that these are:

- Event ticket buyers/holders
- In-person Museum visitors
- Families
- Schools
- Academics
- Donors/Patrons

These groups will contain audiences from our recognised audience segments, provided by The Audience Agency, including:

- *Metroculturals*
- *Kaleidoscope Creativity*
- *Experience Seekers*
- *Trips and Treats*
- *Up Our Street*

Comprehensive audience data and audience segment data will be made available to the selected vendor.

## 2.3 Volume

In the previous fiscal year, we received 127,639 users on our main website (excluding Digitickets and Shopify users). We exceeded our in-person visitor target with a total of 172,462 in-person visitors for the year 2023/24. Our in-person visitor numbers have grown exponentially, with pre-closure (2017/18) in-person visitors at 114,906

Note: Museum of the Home was closed for major redevelopment between 2018 to 2021, including closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2.4 Scope

- Research, working with Museum of the Home’s audience data to identify online audience groups against in-person visitor profiles.
- Suggested methodology for collaborating with the Museum and our audience data agency to address our audience data gaps and map digital user journeys.
- A comprehensive discovery process and approach to this phase, informed by existing and new audience research - gathered from Museum staff and external audiences.
- Comprehensive website requirement and technical planning
- Stakeholder questionnaires to assess further functionality and requirements.
- Full website redesign to WCAG 2.2 AA Guidelines for desktop, tablet, and mobile.
- Scoping and suggesting web accessibility features within the project budget - where suitable to our users.
- Redesign to include:
  - Website strategy
  - Site map
  - Brand expansion, style boarding and website design
  - Front- & back-end development
  - Implementation of new CMS
  - Data migration
  - Full web content audit
- Suggested approach to integration of Digitickets and Shopify, with implementation of software/hardware based on technical scoping.
- Ensuring the successful hosting of new content, video and imagery, bespoke to key website users, as articulated in discovery phase.
- Investigation and reporting on future opportunities and values of CRM integration, such as ThankQ, outside of project scope.
- Full and comprehensive staff training as required for new CMS and solutions.
- Post-launch support including:
  - Continued web support and hosting services
  - Exploration of services (Google Ads; Google Ad Grants; SEO)
  - Continued enhancement of the new site in conjunction with Museum of the Home to keep website fresh and relevant.

## 2.5 Timeline

RFP	Date
RFP distributed	25 April
RFP question and answer period	25 April - 13 May
RFP responses due from vendors	14 May
Evaluation of responses	14 - 21 May
Communication with shortlisted vendors & invitations to meet	22 May
Meeting with shortlisted vendors & final assessments	5-17 June
Communicate with selected vendor (finalist)	18 June
Contracting selected vendor	18 June - 7 July



Website Development & Build	Date
Project Kickoff	8 July 2024
Proposed Website launch date	1 April 2025

### 3. Overall Design & Summary Requirements

#### 3.1 Summary Requirements

The required functionality of our website should be scoped in as part of the project. We have identified our current requirements for the purposes of timeline and budget estimations.

See also: [Scope](#)

##### Must Have

- Full website redesign to WCAG 2.2 AA Guidelines with appropriate accessibility features
- New Content Management System
- Functional audio/visual digital elements on site
- Hosted or embedded video content
- Flexible formats for static images
- Mobile-first design to be as important than web
- Smooth user experience, including improved navigation
- Clearer event listings/calendar (Easier navigation for customers and events page with better, more accessible format)
- Integration of Digitickets system
- User-friendly search functionality
- Back-end reporting

##### Should Have

- User journey-focused areas/landing pages
- Creative and compliant with brand refresh
- Translation of Vietnamese and Cantonese options, or external translation tool function
- Social Media (integration or widgets - Instagram and other social media sites)
- Google ads to increase completed website success
- Search Engine Optimised site to increase success/reach
- Integration of Shopify (online shop)

## Could Have

- Moving images, video or visual elements
- Streaming video capability
- Capability to host/integrate user-friendly WordPress tools
- Possibility of live streaming events or/and playing live or prerecorded leisure learning lectures

## Won't Have

- Full eCommerce capabilities, such as integrated donations, merchandising, auctions, etc
- Augmented Reality or interactive elements integrated
- Online learning function
- Paywalled area for online learning links (member restricted)

## 3.2 Pain Points Addressed

**Internal stakeholder feedback** on Museum of the Home's main website has identified several pain points and areas to be addressed. This is expected to be further expanded through the discovery and audience research phases of the project.

Please note that internal stakeholders currently refer to staff members of the following teams:

- Communications/Marketing
- Visitor Experience
- Commercial Development (Shop, Hires)
- Creative Programming
- Curatorial/Collections
- Development
- CRM/Ticketing
- Operations
- Volunteers

## Feedback

### Content

- *Images do not seem standardised with one clear visual identity, and are sometimes too low resolution*
- *Must be more interactive and engaging*
- *Must include behind the-scenes content*
- *Discursive content could be streamlined*
- *Donation/Giving page needs to be more evident and updated*
- *Information does not reflect current state of exhibitions and updates. Challenging to track this in our current CMS*
- *We need to be bolder about our vision, similar to organisations in the sector*

## Navigation

- *Clunky*
- *Pages are bloated with too much text and too busy for users - makes it confusing to find different elements on the website*
- *Menu bar - useful and easiest to use for some, confusing and unnecessary number of categories for others. Need to go into so many lists to get into one area-like a maze.*
- *Landing page is too static at the moment-nothing is particularly pulling users in and exciting them to explore more*
- *Visitors aren't encouraged to stay on the website. Pages aren't linked to each other in a circular way. User journey ends quickly.*
- *Hierarchy is somewhat muddled--i.e, aside from the pop-ups that say the cafe is closed, it's hard to understand what we feel is most important for visitors to understand. Every page feels similar, which makes my eyes glaze over some parts, especially on the home screen.*

## CMS

- *Integration with the ticketing platform required for less steps involved in making purchases and less clicks to get to destination*
- *Having to update key information on multiple pages (I would LOVE if there was a way that updating the opening hours, updates every single instance of it on the website)*
- *There are a lot of projects that don't have a good place to sit on the website and end up in hard to find places (e.g. discovery garden)*

## Accessibility

- *Feedback from workshops by ESEA community (19 - 35 years old) that they found the website "really inaccessible" to find information and to book the tickets they wanted for a workshop and had to give it several goes.*
- *Brand colours used - particularly our brick orange - combined with the very large white areas make our website appear aggressive. Unsettling with the heavy amount of information and text.*
- *The proportion between the text and the images is very unfriendly and it is too text heavy making both the mobile and the desktop experience unpleasant.*

### 3.3 Assessment Criteria

Vendor proposals will be assessed on the following criteria:

Criteria	
Proposed technical solution	40%
Strategic approach to brief & Museum of Home audiences	30%
Alignment with Museum of Home organisational aims & values	15%
Relevant case studies & portfolio in the sector	15%

## 4. Detailed Response Requirement

### Executive Summary

*Please provide a high-level synopsis of your firm's response to the RFP. The Executive Summary should be a brief overview of the engagement and should identify the main features and benefits of the proposed solution.*

### Approach and Methodology

*Please provide a high level description of your proposed approach and the methodology you would use to achieve the objectives of this project. Ensure that this aligns with Museum of the Home's core values: **Bold, Kind, Eco-active, Equitable***

### Proposed Timeline

*Please provide your proposed timeline and please articulate what parts of the project (if any) you consider feasible to be delivered as quickly as possible.*

### Pricing

*Please provide a high level estimate of costs to do the assessment and deliver recommendations to address the requirements and pain points outlined.*

### Contact Information

Organisation Name	
Contact Name	
Title	
Address	
Office Phone Number	
Mobile Phone Number	
Email	

### Examples

*Please provide 2-3 descriptions/examples of prior work that best exemplifies your company's capabilities and relevance to this project*

## 5. Questions and Answers Period

Questions period is from **Thursday 25 April 2024 (9am)** to **Monday 13 May 2024 (9am)**.  
Please address questions directly to:

Liberty Ip

Head of Communications, Museum of the Home

Email: [lip@museumofthehome.org.uk](mailto:lip@museumofthehome.org.uk)