

Blue North
Request for Proposal – SparkHaus.co Website

I. Statement of Intent.

Blue North, the KY Innovation Hub for Northern Kentucky, is in the process of redeveloping the old Sims Furniture / Montgomery Ward located at 721 - 731 Madison Ave Covington, KY 41011 as SparkHaus, the new Entrepreneurial Hub / Coworking for NKY. Blue North is seeking a qualified vendor to design the SparkHaus website at www.SparkHaus.co.

II. Process

The RFP process will consist of a one phase process. The public phase will allow potential vendors to express their level of interest, general company/organizational capabilities and a high-level budget proposal. Please see the proposal format and submittal requirements below.

III. General Information / Scope of Work

SparkHaus is a non-profit entrepreneurial hub and coworking space that will be managed by Blue North, the KY Innovation Hub for Northern Kentucky. The website will be the digital front door for SparkHaus with the following sections:

- 1.) About: General information about the space including news
- 2.) Membership: Information about options including coworking, private offices, and day passes.
- 3.) Events: Promotion and Calendar of Events hosted at SparkHaus
- 4.) Space Rental: Information on space rental by non-members
- 5.) Sponsors / Community Champions: Sponsorship information and recognition of existing sponsors
- 6.) Member portal (connecting to coworking space management software)

Examples of similar websites include:

<https://www.unionhallcincy.com/>

<https://www.storylouisville.com/>

<https://www.36n.co/>

The main objective of the website is to drive conversions of SparkHaus Membership through Private Offices, Dedicated Desks, and CoWorking. A secondary objective revolves around events and space rental at the building. A such a strong SEO and SEM strategy will be important in the project.

The selected partner will also help Blue North to evaluate the tech stack including coworking space management software such as OfficeRnD, Nexodus, Coworks, and others, as well as integrations with the coworking management software.

SparkHaus will be part of the StartupCincy Ecosystem Passport - <https://startupcincy.com/passport/>

SparkHaus is slated to open in July 2025. This project will be broken into two phases:

- Launch of landing page for SparkHaus by September 2024 to coincide with groundbreaking / start of construction. Landing page will include a connection from BlueNorthKY.com
- Launch of full website including member portal ~1 - 2 months prior to opening

Currently Blue North maintains its own site at BlueNorthKY.com using WordPress. With the launch of SparkHaus, we are debating the right digital communication strategy and if we should maintain two sites or combine them into one digital presence. We are open to staying on WordPress or switching both sites to another platform. In your response, provide your recommendation on the correct approach and strategy behind it. For ongoing maintenance, the preference is a site designed such that the SparkHaus team is able to do the work without external support.

IV. Procurement Schedule

<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>
Advertising RFP	8:00AM	Covington KY	July 8, 2024
Deadline to request additional Information from Blue North	2:00PM	Covington, KY	July 17, 2024
Due date for proposals	2:00PM	Covington, KY	August 2, 2024
Blue North Committee meets to review proposals / Interviews.	1:00PM	Covington, KY	August 5 - 7, 2024
Selected Vendor Chosen for work	6:00PM	Covington, KY	August 9, 2024

In no event shall the deadline for submission of the proposals be changed except by written modification from Blue North and posted on Blue North communication channels.

NOTE: All proposals delivered past the deadline date will be rejected

V. Questions

Any questions regarding this Request for Qualifications should be directed to the Purchasing Agent in writing (preferably by email) to:

Email: dave@bluenorthky.com

All questions must be received by 2:00PM on July 17, 2024. Inquiries received after 2:00PM on July 17, 2024 will not receive responses.

No telephone calls with questions will be taken.

VI. Addenda

Responses to questions will be issued in the form of an Addendum by July 18, 2024. It shall be the responsibility of each Vendor to ensure that their proposal is inclusive of all Addenda. Failure to acknowledge all Addenda may result in rejection of a proposal.

No verbal information to bidders will be binding on Blue North. The written specifications will be considered clear and complete, unless written attention is called to any apparent discrepancies or incompleteness before the opening of the proposals. All alterations to the specifications will be made in the form of written addenda. These addenda shall then be considered to be part of these specifications.

VII. Proposal Format

A. Proposal Expense and Supplied Materials

All costs incurred in the preparation and presentation of this proposal shall be wholly absorbed by the Respondent. Any material submitted by the Respondent shall become the property of the County unless otherwise requested at the time of submission. Any material that is to be considered as confidential in nature must be so marked.

B. Proposal Format

All submissions of proposals shall comply with the following instructions. These instructions are intended to ensure that submissions contain the information required by the County and the submissions have a degree of uniformity in the presentation of material.

Proposals are to be submitted via PDF to dave@bluenorthky.com. The cover page of the PDF should clearly indicate the legal name, address and telephone number of the submitting entity and include an original signature by an officer of the company that is authorized to bind the firm into an agreement. The total proposal should be no more than 5 pages including transmittal letter. An agency capability deck can be included as a separate PDF with no page limit.

Proposals will be received until 2:00PM, Eastern Time, on August 2, 2024. Proposals should include a letter of transmittal or cover letter and are to be organized according to the Table of Contents. The Format shall be as follows:

1. Transmittal Letter – Letter introducing the entity and bidders interest in the project. The names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of those submitting the RFP shall be included in the letter.
2. Description of Site Design and Recommended Technology – Describe at a high level the proposed site architecture / design as well as proposed tech stack for the site with annual software costs. Tech Stack should include but not be limited to Content Management System (CMS), Coworking Space Management Software, newsletter / email (currently mailchimp), event calendar, payment (for membership / day pass), etc. Include your strategy for the digital presence of SparkHaus.co vs BlueNorthKY.com and related channels (social, email, etc).
3. Firm Overview – A brief overview of the organization, including the name and roles of key officers and managers, and experience with similar projects.

4. High Level Cost Proposal & Timeline – Provide a cost proposal for the project including one-time costs and annual recurring costs (if any) for software and maintenance. Provide breakdown of each phase (landing page & full launch) and timeline for the project.