RFP–Web Design, Development and Maintenance Services

09 February 2026

Background to this contract

As Unearthodox continues to grow its profile and activities across research, engagement, incubation, fundraising, and partnerships, our website is a critical platform for communication, credibility, and impact. It supports our engagement with funders, partners, innovators, and wider audiences interested in social innovation for biodiversity conservation and regeneration.

While our current single website provider has delivered significant value and has proven to be a trusted and effective long-term partner, we see the need to transition to an agency-based model that better supports flexibility, long-term continuity, and resilience.

In parallel, Unearthodox has recently articulated a clearer hybrid identity as both a think-tank and an incubator (a "thinkubator"). Our current website structure, however, is still largely organised around programmes, with related content (activities, insights, reports, news, and innovator features) dispersed across different sections, and it doesn't reflect our identity as a thinkubator.

This assignment, therefore, aims to evolve how information flows across the website, enabling content to be surfaced and navigated through our hybrid identity while preserving existing content, URLs, and credibility built over time.

This Request for Proposals is issued to identify a professional agency capable of delivering website design, development, and maintenance services with flexibility, continuity, structured processes, and team-based coverage.

This process is intended to:

- Improve service continuity and risk management
- Ensure long and short-term responsiveness and flexibility, and maintain or improve the quality, performance, adaptability, and security of Unearthodox's website.

Purpose

Unearthodox is seeking proposals from qualified Web Design, Development, and Maintenance Services to provide structured, reliable, and high-quality website services over a seven-month period from 1 June to 31 December 2026, The selected provider will be responsible for revamping, maintaining and improving the Unearthodox website, ensuring its technical stability, usability, accessibility, performance, and alignment with Unearthodox's brand and strategic objectives.

The selected provider will be responsible for:

- Leading a light-to-moderate strategic revamp and restructuring of the existing website focused on information architecture, content organisation, and user experience rather than a full visual rebrand or rebuild.
- Providing ongoing website maintenance and support, including security updates, performance optimisation, and timely issue resolution.
- Delivering incremental, prioritised website enhancements aligned with Unearthodox's evolving organisational priorities and programmes.

This engagement does not constitute a full website rebuild, replatforming, or custom CMS development.

Objectives

The objectives of this consultancy are to:

- Enable navigation and content surfacing that reflect Unearthodox's hybrid identity as a thinkubator (think tank and incubator) across existing programmes, activities, and outputs, without duplication or content loss.
- Improve website usability, clarity, accessibility, and stakeholder focus
- Update page templates and layouts in alignment with Unearthodox's brand and mission
- Ensure service continuity through an agency-based delivery model
- Provide reliable, proactive website maintenance and technical support
- Enable incremental development aligned with evolving priorities
- Ensure the website remains secure, accessible (WCAG 2.1 AA), and technically robust

Main functions of the contract and deliverables

The contract covers website design, development, optimisation, and maintenance services for Unearthodox between 1 June 2026 and 31 December 2026, delivered within the existing WordPress and Oxygen setup. No platform migration, CMS consolidation, or full rebuild is included unless explicitly agreed.

DELIVERABLES	TIMELINE
June 2026: Onboarding/Handover and Diagnostic Phase Activities: ● Onboarding and handover with the incumbent website manager ● Technical, security, performance, and accessibility audit ● Review of existing website architecture, WordPress and Oxygen configuration, hosting environment, integrations, and editorial workflows Deliverables: ● Website Audit Report (technical, security, performance, accessibility) ● Agreed on Detailed Work Plan and Delivery Schedule	June 2026
July-August 2026: Strategic Restructuring and Planning Activities: ● Strategic review of site structure, navigation, and content organisation ● Review of how key content types (activities, insights, reports, news, innovator features) are structured, surfaced, and cross-linked ● Stakeholder-centric UX review and recommendations ● Development of redesign concepts and wireframes (as applicable) ● Alignment of design approach with Unearthodox's brand, mission, and strategic objectives Deliverables ● Website Redesign and UX Recommendations, including revised site structure, navigation, and content surfacing approach ● Approved Design Direction and Implementation Plan	July-August 2026
September - October 2026: Development and Incremental Improvements Activities: ● Implementation of approved design, structural, and functional changes within the existing WordPress and Oxygen architecture ● Incremental development and functional enhancements prioritised with Unearthodox ● Performance optimisation and accessibility improvements ● Cross-browser and cross-device testing ● Ongoing maintenance, updates, and issue resolution Deliverables: ● Implemented Website Improvements and Enhancements. Website revamp completed. ● Concise (1-3 pages) Monthly Maintenance and Activity Reports	September - October 2026
November 2026: Stabilisation and Review Activities: ● Continued maintenance and monitoring ● Review of implemented changes against objectives ● Identification of remaining gaps, risks, or improvement opportunities Deliverables ● Consolidated Review and Recommendations Note	November 2026
December 2026: Wrap up and Forward Planning Activities: ● Final quality assurance and performance checks across the website	December 2026

• Completion and consolidation of all technical, maintenance, and handover documentation
• Definition of anticipated design and development requirements, including ad hoc content sections and ongoing update workflows
• Agreement on service assumptions, response times, and delivery approach for the forward period
• Development of a structured 12-month Website Design, Development, and Maintenance Plan for 2027.
• Preparation of the 2027 working plan by the incumbent provider, forming the basis for a proposed continuation of services at the same level.
 	
Deliverables:
• Final Summary Report, consolidating activities, outcomes, and lessons
• Updated Website Documentation, including technical architecture, maintenance procedures, and handover materials
• 12-Month Website Design, Development, and Maintenance Plan for 2027, including:
  ○ Planned design and development of at least three ad hoc website sections, including:
  1. Annual Report section
  2. One major report/publication
  3. One external engagement or campaign section
Note: The 2027 plan is for planning and estimation purposes only; implementation is outside the scope of this contract.	

Ongoing Deliverables (Throughout the Contract Period) In addition to the phase-specific deliverables above, the provider will deliver: • Ongoing website maintenance, including security updates, performance optimisation, backups, and issue resolution • Monthly maintenance and activity reports, outlining work completed, issues identified, and actions taken • Responsive support in line with the agreed service model and response times	June-December 2026

Budget

As a non-profit organisation, Unearthodox operates with limited financial resources and seeks proposals that reflect a strong alignment between scope, impact, and cost-efficiency. We invite bidders to submit fixed-price proposals that are realistic, transparent, and mindful of these constraints, while still delivering high-quality outcomes.

For pricing and planning purposes, bidders should assume the following estimated level of effort:

Indicative Total Effort
- Approx. 90–100 person-days total over 7 months

Indicative Monthly Allocation
- June–August (Design & Planning): ~15–18 days/month
- September–October (Development & Improvements): ~14–16 days/month
- November–December (Maintenance, QA, Planning): ~8–10 days/month

Effort Includes
- Strategic consultancy for the website revamp, design, development, and maintenance work
- Project management and coordination
- Meetings, reporting, documentation, and handover

Working approach

The selected agency will primarily work with Unearthodox's Director of Engagement and Development or a delegated representative.

Expectations include:

- Regular touchpoint meetings to be held monthly, or at a cadence mutually determined by both parties.
- Clear, concise reporting (brief narrative summaries are acceptable)
- Collaborative working approach with Unearthodox staff and partners

Agency Profile

Proposals should demonstrate the following:

Organisational Capacity

- An agency-based delivery model with multiple team members
- Clear arrangements for continuity of service and staff coverage
- Defined internal quality assurance processes

Technical Expertise

- Proven WordPress experience
- Website security, performance, and accessibility expertise

Project and Service Management

- Experience delivering under fixed-price or SLA-style arrangements
- Ability to balance maintenance with incremental development

Procedure for Submitting Proposals

Proposals must be submitted via email to: info@uneartodox.org
For any questions regarding this Request for Proposals, please contact: Fabio Pianini, fabio.pianini@unearthodox.org

Deadline for submission: 10th April 2026
Late submissions will not be considered.
Unearthodox reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. Bidders shall bear all costs associated with preparing and submitting their proposals.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include:

- Agency profile (max. 2 pages)
- Proposed service model and SLA approach
- Team structure and role coverage
- Conflict of interest disclosure
- Fixed-price financial proposal in CHF, including payment schedule

Unearthodox welcomes proposals from international and fully remote agencies, including those based in India. Reasonable overlap with Central European Time (CET) is expected.

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be assessed on:

- Experience and continuity of service – 30%
- Technical competence and service model – 30%
- Understanding of Unearthodox's mission and stakeholder engagement approach – 20%
- Value for money – 20%

Shortlisted bidders may be invited to a 45-minute virtual interview.

Terms and Conditions

- Unearthodox reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal

- Technical evaluation will precede financial evaluation
- Any form of canvassing will result in automatic disqualification
- Unearthodox may cancel this RFP at any time without liability
- Unearthodox is under no obligation to award the contract to the lowest-priced bidder
- All deliverables shall become the intellectual property of Unearthodox upon full payment