

Request for Proposals - Website Rebuild and Ongoing Maintenance

RFP n#: 2025-9-CM-WEBSITE

Location: Remote

Start date: 01/03/2026

End date: 31/04/2028

Better Cotton key contact:

Joe Morphet
Communications



All applications must be submitted via this [form](#).

You may submit questions to tender@bettercotton.org - RFP n# 2025-9-CM-WEBSITE until 23 September 2025.

Questions, requests and applications sent after the deadline (09/10/2025) will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

PLEASE NOTE THE DEADLINE HAS NOW BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL THE 9th October 2025. IF YOU HAVE ALREADY SUBMITTED A PROPOSAL BUT WISH TO RESUBMIT BASED ON INFORMATION FOUND IN THE Q&A SECTION, PLEASE DO SO BY COMPLETING THE FORM AGAIN, VIA THE LINK PROVIDED IN THIS DOCUMENT.

AT THE END OF THIS DOCUMENT, THERE IS A QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION WHICH YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO GO THROUGH IN PREPARATION FOR SUBMITTING YOUR BIDS

Description

Better Cotton is the world's largest cotton sustainability programme. Our mission: to help cotton farming communities survive and thrive, while protecting and restoring the environment. In difficult times, we are meeting the challenge head on. Through our network of field-level partners we have provided training on more sustainable farming practices to more than 2.9 million cotton farmers in

26 countries. More than a fifth of the world's cotton is now grown under the Better Cotton Standard and our membership network includes more than 2,400 members.

More information about Better Cotton can be found on our website: www.bettercotton.org

Background

We are seeking proposals from technically skilled service providers interested in taking on the responsibility for managing and rebuilding the Better Cotton website. We are looking for a partner that can support us with both day-to-day maintenance of the site, servers and domains, in addition to rebuilding the website based on recent audit findings.

The comprehensive audit from early 2025 gathered objective, expert insights on the website's user experience (UX), accessibility, and search engine optimisation (SEO). The project also produced recommendations on how to incorporate the organisation's refreshed brand identity, which is launching in October alongside our new on-product label.

The project born out of the audit findings includes three phases:

Phase 1:

Based on this audit, Better Cotton is currently in phase 1 of a website refresh, implementing priority changes to the site to reflect the new brand and improve user experience. These changes will be launched in October.

However, to address the audit findings, a more thorough rebuild of the website is needed to make it a critical tool in managing and building our reputation, reflecting our core business needs.

Phase 2:

In phase 2, between October 2025 and March 2026, Better Cotton will build on the initial updates and prepare for the full website rebuild. During this transition period, our focus will be on consolidating existing improvements, applying actionable insights from the audits and developing a robust content and messaging strategy to support the future site.

Phase 3:

The target date for full rebuild to kick off is March 2026. Phase 3 is the major project set out in the scope of work under Component 2.

Scope of Work

Potential Providers are expected to give clear methodology and a pricing structure for each of the two components:

Component 1: Day-to-Day Management

The selected Service Provider will take on responsibility for the technical maintenance and management of the Better Cotton website, under the supervision of the Better Cotton's Communications Team.

They will provide maintenance of the existing site and Content Management System (WordPress) to ensure that the bettercotton.org website is functioning properly, and any issues or downtime are identified and resolved quickly. They will handle licensing and maintenance of CMS plugins.

They will support Better Cotton to make content and usability improvements to the website and hold weekly update calls with a Better Cotton communications Team Focal Point to ensure that all updates are rolled out in a timely manner.

They will give guidance and support with using GA4, Google Search Console and other analytical tools where necessary, and use these tools to provide regular actionable insights.

They will help ensure that the Better Cotton communications team have all the necessary technical tools to implement best SEO practices when publishing content on the website.

They will also support with managing Better Cotton's servers, domains, and web hosting, including other associated websites and platforms, including the Better Cotton Conference website.

Component 2: Website Rebuild

The second required output is a modern, scalable website that integrates SEO, UX and brand storytelling from the ground up. This work will address structural issues identified in the audit by building a new site which will improve user journeys and better align with audience needs.

The website should be designed to support multilingual content.

The current website is built on WordPress, but we are open to exploring alternative CMS platforms if they are better suited for our long-term needs.

Key outputs include:

- Collaborative Kick Off (Remote): Alignment on strategic goals, technical requirements and delivery milestones
- Workshop with Comms Team & workshop with key stakeholders (remote or if possible in London)
- Roadmap presentation
- Gantt chart outlining the process and timeline. (Please consider dates provided of each Phase)
- Personnel involved; hours, technical skills
- Project deliverables: Developing a new website, whilst maintaining existing site in the meantime.
- Creating new and refreshed web content aligned with our SEO strategy, brand messaging, theory of change and more.
- CMS training for internal teams (Remote onboarding – minimum 3 persons maximum 10)

Key Requirements:

- Project management and clear focal points
- Content migration, ensuring all high-quality content is retained and optimised
- Application of audit recommendations to ensure technical optimisation, improved user experience and search visibility
- Recommendations on appropriate CMS
- Consideration of approach to multilingual content and translation within CMS & any previous experience linked to this

In addition to skills, competencies and expertise, we will consider examples of previous experience, value for money and demonstrable commitment to the sustainability field to evaluate applications.

High-level Timeline

Better Cotton Internal Timeline	
Ongoing until 7 October 2025	Phase 1: Better Cotton implementing priority updates to website
8 October 2025 – 28 February 2026	Phase 2: Better Cotton building on initial updates and preparing for the full website rebuild
1 March 2026 - 28 February 2027	Phase 3: Full rebuild
RFP Timeline	
9 October 2025	Applications deadline All applications must be submitted via this form .
10 October to 14 November 2025	Applications review, shortlisting & interviews (Minimum 2 rounds)
By 21 November 2025	The successful applicant will be notified Unsuccessful <u>shortlisted</u> applicants will also be notified
1 March 2026	Start of the consultancy
By February 2027	Website rebuild complete

By March 2027

CMS Training

Required Skills & Knowledge

Skills, Knowledge and Experience
Essential
At least 5 years of experience in website design and management
In-house technical expertise
Solid knowledge of UI, UX, SEO and website accessibility
Experience in managing websites using Wordpress
Experience in managing web domains and servers
Experience using Google Analytics
Project management competencies
Optional
Fluent English: Better Cotton's language of operation is English
Experience in other CMS
Commitment to sustainability

Application Requirements

Please note that we have changed our RFP submission protocol, and this is now in two phases;

- **Phase 1: Initial details will be submitted on the form found in this [link](#).**
- **Phase 2: You will receive an email with live links to upload relevant documents (please check your Spam and Junk folders)**

Proposals responding to this Request for Proposals should include the following:

- Overview of relevant experience
- Examples of current and previous customers or projects
- CVs or List of Qualifications
- Clear methodology for Components 1 & 2.
- Timeline mapped in a Gantt chart for Component 2.
- Detailed and transparent budget for Components 1 & 2, in an excel format, in EUROS, including time allocation and day rates (suggested example template cost sheet provided in Annex 1 for Management & Maintenance Component only)

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only shortlisted applicants will be contacted.

Better Cotton is committed to good practice and transparency in the management of natural, human and financial resources. All applications will be reviewed under the principles and subject to Better Cotton's policies on equal opportunity, non-discrimination, anti-bribery & corruption and conflict of interest.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Technical Evaluation Criteria

- Demonstrated understanding of this RFP
- Quality and clarity of the proposed approach and methodology
- Feasibility of the proposed activity plan and timeline, and appropriateness of time allocated to delivering each task
- Relevant professional experience of the proposed Service Provider
- Quality and relevance of the sample work submitted

Financial Evaluation Criteria

- Quality and clarity of budget provided, and level of detail included
- Alignment of the budget to the activity timeline detailed in the technical proposal
- Value for money
- Adherence to the available budget

Annex 1 – Cost Sheet

Management & Maintenance of Current Better Cotton Website

Hosting & Maintenance

Type	Frequency	Stream name	Amount (£)

Licensing & Other Costs

Plugin (s)	Amount £*

Management & Maintenance of Rebuilt Better Cotton Website

Hosting & Maintenance

Type	Frequency	Stream name	Amount (£)

Licensing & Other Costs

Plugin (s)	Amount £*

RFP 2025-9-CM-WEBSITE

Questions & Answers

Question 1

Multilingual Content: For the website's multilingual/localized versions, will Better Cotton provide the content in the respective languages, or should we account for content creation/translation support beyond English?

Answer

Due to the range of languages, we operate in and the scale of the website, Better Cotton will not provide translated versions of content. Our current provider uses a Wordpress plugin called GTranslate for automatic translation of content – we will need a tool that fulfils that functionality.

Question 2

User Portal: Could you please confirm whether the scope includes designing and developing the MyBetterCotton user portal in addition to the main website, or if the project is focused solely on the public-facing website?

Answer

The scope does not include the myBetterCotton portal, or the Better Cotton Platform. However, we would be open to recommendations from the service provider on aligning or merging platforms. The selected provider will also be expected to support with integrations between these platforms and the website where necessary.

Question 3

I noticed that WordPress is listed as the preferred platform. While we do not specialise in WordPress, our team focuses on building custom solutions that are designed to be scalable, secure, and flexible - qualities that can be particularly valuable for an international organisation like Better Cotton. A custom build can also reduce dependency on third-party plugins and ensure your digital platform evolves seamlessly as your needs grow.

Would you be open to exploring this approach as part of the RFP process, or are you definitely moving forward with WordPress?

Answer

Expertise in Wordpress will be necessary, as the current site runs on this CMS, and the provider will be required to manage the existing site before a new site is built. However, we are not committed to Wordpress as the solution for the new site – we are open to the service provider's recommendations on the appropriate system.

Question 4

The website is translated into a lot of languages right now. Will the amount of languages remain the same?

Answer

Better Cotton operates in 15+ countries, and as such, we need a range of language options. Our core languages are English, Arabic, French, Mandarin, Portuguese, Tajik, Russian, Urdu, Uzbek (Latin and Cyrillic) and Turkish, but we do appreciate the ability for speakers of other languages to also access our content. As a result, and given the scale of the website, our current provider uses a Wordpress plugin called GTranslate for automatic translation of content. We will need a tool that fulfils this functionality – we are open to the service provider's recommendations.

Question 5

Which tool are you using for this translation? Are you happy with this tool?

Answer

Our current provider uses a Wordpress plugin called GTranslate for automatic translation of content. This is an affordable solution that gives us a wide range of languages, however the accuracy isn't optimal. We are open to the service provider's recommendations on this.

Question 6

Can we make the assumption that all texts we write will be auto translated and the purchase of the credits to do so are out of this offer's scope?

Answer

Our current provider uses a Wordpress plugin called GTranslate for automatic translation of content. The proposal can include recommendations on a translation solution, outlining associated costs.

Question 7

Should we take into account any integrations: e.g. Salesforce/Hubspot?

Answer

Teams within Better Cotton use Salesforce for membership and contact management. Salesforce is integrated with our myBetterCotton member portal and our Better Cotton Platform sourcing platform, but it is not currently integrated with our website. We are open to exploring integration, but it is not essential.

Question 8

How satisfied are you about the current setup? Would you prefer a completely new rebuild or would you prefer us to use the existing back-end as a foundation?

Answer

The external audit we commissioned recommended that we build a new website, so we are following this guidance. We will share this audit report and findings with the selected provider.

Question 9

We assume MyBetterCotton isn't part of the scope. Is this correct?

Answer

The scope does not include the myBetterCotton portal, or the Better Cotton Platform. However, we would be open to recommendations from the service provider on aligning or merging platforms.

The selected provider will also be expected to support with integrations between these platforms and the website where necessary.

Question 10

Do you envision large structural changes to the website, i.e. should we take into account more complexity when creating a proposal for your website?

Answer

A key priority for the website will be simplifying and reducing volume of content wherever possible, so we do not foresee any increased complexity.

Question 11

In terms of functionality and interaction, do you expect to have different dynamics on your website compared to the current version (e.g. more interactivity, more video, gifs, moving graphs, ...). If so, can you briefly explain expectations?

Answer

We would like to make the website's user experience as engaging as possible. We will take the service provider's recommendations on how to achieve this.

Question 12

We won't be involved in Phase 1 and Phase 2?

Answer

Phase 1 is currently in progress, and Phase 2 will be an internal preparatory phase. Phase 3, commencing in March 2026, is where we are seeking support.

Question 13

Component 1: day-to-day management: Will this also start in March 2026 or is this also during phase 1 and 2?

Answer

Everything, including Component 1, will start in March 2026.

Question 14

You also mention we will be responsible to create new and refreshed content: does this mean we will be responsible for rewriting the entire content of the website? Or do you also envision us writing blog posts, case studies, white papers ...? If so, how many blogs/case studies do you envision us writing per month?

Answer

'New and refreshed content' refers to content on static webpages. Blogs/case studies/white papers are out of scope.

Question 15

We notice increasing the accessibility and inclusiveness of your website isn't mentioned in the brief. Is this no focus at all or can we include it in our proposal (we can add it as an extra)?

Answer

We welcome the inclusion of accessibility in proposals.

Question 16

Are you working within a specific/estimated budget, if so could you give any further details? Is there specific allocation for each Phase of work, or is it just total for all 3 phases combined?

Answer

We cannot provide any information on budget at this stage. In terms of allocation between Component 1 and Component 2, we are open to the service provider's recommendations.

Question 17

Audit finding details: You mention the early 2025 audit identified UX, accessibility and SEO issues - would you be able to share any more specifics about the most critical problems? Would help us understand priorities for the rebuild

Answer

We will not be sharing further details at this stage, but we will share the full audit report and findings with the selected service provider.

Question 18

Strategic maintenance approach: The RFP outlines comprehensive maintenance for Component 1 - would you be open to exploring the approach here? We're wondering whether focusing on essential maintenance (security, uptime, basic fixes) and channeling more investment into an accelerated rebuild timeline (or at least phased to launch a new core site earlier) might work better for your goals. Happy to discuss both approaches so we can better understand what you need for this phase.

Answer

We are open to exploring the approach here – we will take the service provider's recommendations.

Question 19

Current technical startup: What's your current hosting situation and are there any particular constraints there? Also, you mention wanting multilingual support - any experience with translation workflows or specific requirements there?

Answer

Our current provider handles hosting through Digital Ocean and Cloudflare, using accounts that Better Cotton has shared ownership over. There are no specific constraints, but we will need support managing existing domains (included affiliated domains for sites e.g. the BCI Cotton label and the Better Cotton Conference) and setting up new domains where necessary.

Better Cotton operates in 15+ countries, and as such, we need a range of language options. Our core languages are English, Arabic, French, Mandarin, Portuguese, Tajik, Russian, Urdu, Uzbek (Latin and Cyrillic) and Turkish, but we do appreciate the ability for speakers of other languages to also access our content. As a result, and given the scale of the website, our current provider uses a Wordpress plugin called GTranslate for automatic translation of content. We will need a tool that fulfils this functionality – we are open to the service provider's recommendations.

Question 20

Scope and ambition: Could you give us any guidance on the scale you're thinking for the rebuild? We deliver new websites across all different price points; we want to make sure we're matching our proposal to your level of ambition and budget - whether that's a solid functional rebuild or something more comprehensive with deeper user involvement, advanced features and/or integrations.

Answer

We cannot provide any information on budget at this stage – we are open to the service provider's recommendations in terms of scale, based on their expertise and evaluation of the site.