

Request for Proposal (RFP)

Pimcore Website Support and Continuous Development for Helvetas

Helvetas invites interested parties to provide offers for the services as described below.

1. Background

Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation invites interested agencies/companies to submit bids for managing Helvetas' Pimcore website, advising us on various website-related topics, and implementing our requirements in a timely manner.

The specific information and requirements are outlined in detail in Chapter 9 – Evaluation of bids of this document.

This contract does not include a website relaunch or redesign; it focuses instead on ongoing support, maintenance and clearly defined minor enhancements.

2. Timetable

	DATE	TIME - CET
Tender announcement published on the Helvetas website and advertised via digital channels.	16 April 2026	N/A
Deadline for written enquiries to procurement.HO@helvetas.org	06 May 2026	17:00 CET
Last date for Helvetas to issue clarifications (clarifications can be found in the same link where this RFP was posted on Helvetas' website)	22 May 2026	17:00 CET
Deadline for submitting offers to the procurement.HO@helvetas.org account ¹	12 June 2026	17:00 CET
Short get-to-know-you call with 3-5 top scoring bids	09 July 2026	
Presentation/pitch with 2-3 top scoring bids	04 September 2026	
Decision on new web agency	18 September 2026	

3. Nature of the contract

A framework and SLA agreement with a term of 4 years.

4. Negotiations

Helvetas reserves the right to enter into negotiations with all, or individual, or part of eligible bidders in order to amend and/or complete their original offers. Negotiations may concern the technical, financial, legal and

¹ Any application received after this deadline will not be considered.

other aspects of the contract.

5. Conditions of participation and grounds for exclusion

Participation is open only to legal entities registered within the Time Zone CET (UTC +1), with a time difference of +/- 1 hour.

The following are not eligible to participate:

- Entities or groupings of such entities (consortia) are not allowed to apply².
- Public officials
- Experts may only be named in one bid submitted by an agency. Multiple mentions in several bids will result in exclusion from the process.

6. Costs for preparing the bid

All costs incurred by the bidder in connection with the preparation and submission of the bid will not be reimbursed. This also applies to costs incurred in the course of negotiations or discussions. The bidder is fully responsible for all costs.

7. Provisional commencement date of the contract

01 January 2027.

8. Planned implementation period and possible contract extension

Cooperation with the selected agency will begin on 01 January 2027. The contract has a term of four years and can be terminated by either party within twelve months.

9. Evaluation of bids

Each bid will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria and the weighting as explained in this document. The criteria for evaluation of services will be examined in accordance with the requirements indicated in this document and its attachments.

The entire evaluation procedure is confidential. The Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) decisions are collective, and its deliberations are held in a face-to-face or virtual session. The members of the TEC are bound to secrecy. The evaluation reports and written records are for official use only and may be communicated neither to the bidders nor to any party other than Helvetas.

9.1 Evaluation of bids

Eligibility, Technical and Financial offers will be evaluated as per the criteria set below.

9.1.1 Eligibility criteria

² A consortium may be a permanent, legally established grouping or a grouping that has been constituted informally for a specific tender procedure.

Only the bidders that provide a signed form below will be processed for further evaluation:

- **Eligibility Documentation Form (See ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION under PART 1 below)**

9.1.2 Evaluation of technical criteria of eligible offers

The evaluation is carried out by an internal Evaluation Committee (TEC) based on the following criteria.

Only offers scoring at least 60 points in the technical evaluation will be considered further.

Category	Requirement	Description	Documentary Evidence	Weighting Points
A. Technical Requirements				
Code Quality	Clean development standards	Git, branching, code reviews, pull requests	Process documentation	30
Deployment	Structured deployment processes	Staging --> QA --> Live; no live development Version-controlled, traceable deployments using Git-based workflows, including safe rollback strategies for all releases.	Process documentation	
Testing	Automated & manual testing	Unit, integration, device, regression tests	Test concept	
Performance	Optimized Core Web Vitals	LCP <2.5s, CLS <0.1, FID/TBT best practice	Process documentation	
Security	Proactive maintenance	Monitoring, patches, TLS, backups	Process documentation	
Integrations	Stable integrations	RaiseNow, MS Dynamics, GA4, Google Tag Manager, cookie management	Technical documentation	
B. SEO & UX Requirements				
Internationalization	SEOcompliant -multi-domain setup	Hreflang, canonicals, clean URL logic	Project examples	12
Technical SEO/GEO	Comprehensive SEO & GEO expertise	Indexing, crawling, structured data	Project examples	
UX & IA	UX development	Wireframes, prototyping, testing	Portfolio	
Monitoring	SEO monitoring	Reporting, alerts, Core Web Vitals tracking	Reporting samples	
C. Service Level & Support				
Response Times	Clear SLA times	Urgent ≤1h including weekends, High ≤1 working day, Normal ≤2 working days, Low ≤3 working days	Offer for SLA	26
Processing Start	Defined timelines	Urgent ≤2h including weekends, High ≤2 working days, Normal ≤10 working days	Offer for SLA	
Capacity	Year-round availability	Defined core team & substitution	Team setup	
Ticketing	Transparent processes	Tool usage & effort estimates	Process description	

Category	Requirement	Description	Documentary Evidence	Weighting Points
Quality Assurance Onboarding	Documented QA processes Structured onboarding	Testing, approval, bug tracking Audit, cleanup concept, backlog setup	QA concept Onboarding plan	12
D. Organizational & Strategic Requirements Consulting NGO Expertise Communication Documentation	Holistic thinking Experience with NGOs Transparent collaboration Complete & comprehensible	Proactive suggestions, roadmaps Understanding of fundraising & international context Regular updates & documentation Release notes, technical documentation	Project examples References Process description Documentation samples	

9.1.3 Evaluation of financial offers

Once the technical evaluation scoring is final, the TEC will be processed with the financial offers evaluation.

Requirements	Documentary evidence	Weighting points
Financial offer according to instructions in PART 2 of this document	Financial offer in CHF or EUR	20

The 3 to 5 highest-scoring bids, based on the combined technical and financial score, will receive a get-to-know-you call from TEC to discuss the technical evaluation offer. The other bidders will be disqualified at this stage.

After the call with the 3 to 5 highest-scoring bidders, the TEC will eliminate 2 of them and proceed with the pitch presentation with the remaining 3 bidders.

The TEC is entitled to initiate a reference and/or background check for the top three remaining bidders. Based on the pitch presentation results, reference and/or background checks, the TEC will award the winner.

9.1.4 Submission of bids

Bids must be submitted via email in electronic format only. The technical and financial offers should be submitted in separate password protected files. The third file containing the passwords should be open without password.

The technical offer shall contain:

1. **Signed Eligibility Documentation Form³** – as per ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION PART 1 below
2. Bidders have to supply the technical offer, accompanied by the following proof/documentation mentioned in the technical requirement table above (article 9.1.2) under the column 'Documentary Evidence', such as:
 - Technical Requirements
 - SEO/GEO & UX Requirements
 - Service Level & Support
 - Organizational & Strategic Requirements

The name of the file should have the bidder's name, Reference no, and the text 'Eligibility and Technical offer documents' (for example, ***Agency Name OC-0003-MC eligibility and technical offer documents***).

The financial offer shall contain:

1. **Filled and signed Financial Offer form** - as per PART 2 - Financial offer below in this document.

The name of the file should have the bidder's name, Reference no, and the text 'Financial offer documents' (for example, ***Agency Name OC-0003-MC financial offer documents***).

The Password file should have the bidder's name, Reference no, and the text 'passwords' (for example, ***Agency Name OC-0003-MC passwords***).

The subject of the email should contain only the PRF reference number (***OC-0003-MC***).

The body of the email should contain the bidder's official name, address, and telephone number.

Offers and file with passwords must be submitted in German or in English to the following email address only: procurement.HO@helvetas.org.⁴ Offers submitted after the deadline mentioned under point 2, Timetable of this RFP, will not be considered. The counted official receipt time is the time shown on the email received from the bidder.

³ Electronic copies of eligibility documentation should be provided only by the winning bidder prior to contract signing.

⁴ Offers submitted without a password will not be considered

10. Contract award

Contract will be awarded to the economically most advantageous offer. The economically most advantageous offer is determined through a one-stage evaluation process by weighing technical quality against price on an 80/20 basis. The financial offer scoring will be evaluated using the 'Relative Cost Scoring' method.

Helvetas will award a framework agreement to the selected bidder in accordance with the criteria and processes set out in Article 9.

After evaluating the offers, Helvetas reserves the right to enter into negotiations with all or part of the eligible bidders to amend and/or complete their original offers.

Helvetas reserves the right to contract only part of the required services or cancel this tender procedure should it not be satisfied with the quality of offers.

11. Modification or withdrawal of bids

Bidders may modify or withdraw their bids in writing before the deadline for submission. No modifications are permitted after this deadline.

Helvetas retains ownership of all bids that have not been withdrawn. Bidders have no right to claim the return of their bids.

12. Validity of offers

Bidders are bound by their tenders for 180 days after the deadline for submitting offers. In exceptional cases, before the period of validity expires, Helvetas may ask bidders to extend the period of validity for a specific number of days, which may not exceed 40.

13. Signature of the contract(s)

Within 10 working days of receipt of the contract already signed by Helvetas, the selected bidder shall sign and date the contract. Failure of the selected bidder to comply with this requirement may constitute grounds for annulling the decision to award the contract. In this event, Helvetas may award the tender to another bidder or cancel the tender procedure.

14. Terms of payments

Helvetas in Switzerland is a payer of value added tax (VAT). Prices in the application must be submitted, taking into account all expenses.

The payment will be made via bank account transfer to the winner of the tender in CHF within a maximum of 30 working days from the date of acceptance of goods or execution of services or works. Cases of non-performance of obligation and their legal consequences will be separately indicated in the contract.

15. Terms of cooperation

Helvetas has the right to choose a supplier/ implementer on the given offer according to its own discretion. Helvetas has the right to re-formulate the Request for Quotation (RFQ), Invitation to Bid (ITB) or Request for Proposal (RFP) to its own discretion, if any additional items are needed.

16. Ethics clauses/Corruptive practices

Attempts to obtain confidential information, enter into illegal agreements with competitors or influence the evaluation team or Helvetas will result in exclusion from the procedure and, if necessary, further sanctions.

Bidders must not have any conflicts of interest with other bidders or parties involved in the project implementation.

Helvetas reserves the right to suspend or terminate the tender procedure or a contract that has been awarded if corruption is detected at any stage.

If it is determined that a contract was awarded or executed on the basis of so-called unusual commercial expenses (e.g. undeclared commissions, payments to offshore recipients, fictitious invoices), the contract may be cancelled and the responsible suppliers sanctioned.

Helvetas may suspend or cancel the procedure if substantial errors, irregularities or fraud are detected – even after the contract has been awarded.

17. Contract language

All written communications within the scope of this tendering procedure and all contract documents must be written in German or English.

18. Further information

The conclusion of the procedure and the award of a contract are subject to the availability of financial resources.

Helvetas reserves the right to cancel this award procedure at any time and without giving reasons – without any resulting obligations.

PART 1 - ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION FORM

LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Eligibility criteria

Requirements	Documentary evidence
Legal registration	Certificate of incorporation or business registration issued by the relevant authorities, or any other relevant evidence. (e.g. "Excerpt from the Swiss Commercial Register".)
Pimcore Gold Partner or higher (min. 10 certified staff)	Certificates, partner status
Team size (minimum 10) and team language capabilities (German or English)	Agency organization chart and team profile document
Sustainability and quality assurance. Approach to ethics and data protection (FADP – Federal Act on Data Protection)	Data protection concept, ethics guidelines, or any other relevant evidence.
Minimum 5 years in operation	Ensure the entity's first registration date is provided in the certificate of incorporation or business registration issued by the relevant authorities.

STATEMENT

I, the undersigned hereby, declare that we have in possession all documents listed above. All documents are valid as requested in the table above and hard copies or electronic copies can be distributed as/when needed.

Signed on behalf of the bidder

Name	
Signature	
Date	

PART 2 - FINANCIAL OFFER

The financial offer must be presented in CHF or EUR per line item. Each line item is described in detail, and based on these details, the bidder should provide the total amount in CHF or EUR for each line. The fees proposed in this offer should be all-inclusive for the services stipulated below. The bidder is responsible for all other taxes and duties in compliance with relevant legislation.

Description	QTY	CHF	Weight
Further Website Development – 80h/ year	Lump sum	Add the price for 80hrs	7
SLA offer: Support on website maintenance as mentioned in Chapter 9.1.2 Evaluation of technical criteria of eligible offers - 10h/ month	Lump sum	Add the price for 10hrs	7
Hourly price for Project Manager (in case exceeding the hours mentioned in lines 1 and 2)	1	Add the price per hour	1
Hourly price for Senior Developer (in case exceeding the hours mentioned in lines 1 and 2)	1	Add the price per hour	1
Hourly price for Developer (in case exceeding the hours mentioned in lines 1 and 2)	1	Add the price per hour	1
Hourly price for UX (in case exceeding the hours mentioned in lines 1 and 2)	1	Add the price per hour	1
Hourly price for SEO (in case exceeding the hours mentioned in lines 1 and 2)	1	Add the price per hour	1
Hourly price for QA (in case exceeding the hours mentioned in lines 1 and 2)	1	Add the price per hour	1

Signed on behalf of the bidder

Name	
Signature	
Date	

Annex 1

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Initial Situation & Goal of the Project

About Helvetas

Helvetas is a leading Swiss organization for development cooperation and humanitarian aid – denominationally neutral and politically independent. As an association with a strong membership base in Switzerland, we are committed to equal opportunities worldwide. With around 1400 employees, we are active in around 35 project countries worldwide and in 2024 we were able to support around 4.9 million people through our development cooperation projects.

Our vision is a just world in which all people live self-determinedly in dignity and security, use natural resources sustainably and take care of the environment.

Our mission: Helvetas supports disadvantaged people in developing and transition countries who actively want to improve their living conditions. With development cooperation based on partnership, we promote help for self-help and create fair opportunities for all. After disasters and in times of crisis, we provide humanitarian aid. In Switzerland, we are committed to a coherent foreign and economic policy that meets the needs of people in developing and transition countries.

Our website & current web agency

In 2018, the website was relaunched with the CMS Pimcore. We started with the free, open-source version of Pimcore and switched to the paid license in 2022.

How we work with the website at Helvetas

- In the head office (Switzerland) there is a person responsible for the website and the main contact person for the web agency. Another 2-3 people who communicate with the web agency or set up tickets. In addition, around 20 other people who regularly or punctually create content.
- In the Helvetas countries, there are another approximately 40 people who work with Pimcore regularly or rarely. They do not contact the agency directly.
- The Pimcore know-how of some website editors is not very deep, as they rarely work with it and have too few resources for it.
- This not only creates many errors, but also a lot of clutter in the backend, e.g. in the assets, a content graveyard, etc.

Why are we considering a new collaboration

- New Helvetas internal procurement requirements
- Increase the work efficiency with the newly established contract:
 - Efficient response time, timely ticket resolutions by the agency
 - Solid developers team at the agency
 - Focus on direct implementation of our specifications, proactive, and holistic thinking

- The agency will test the implementations so Helvetas will encounter fewer errors when using the updates.
- Customer-centric approach by the agency
- State-of-the-art communication between the Helvetas staff, the agency Project Manager, and the team
- Strong know-how in the field of SEO & GEO

Project Objective

We would like to work with a web agency that takes good care of our website, advises us on various topics related to the website and implements our requirements in a timely manner.

2. Conditions of our websites

- CMS Pimcore (v10.5.15)
- 3 domains (helvetas.org; helvetas.de; helvetasusa.org) managed in the same CMS
- Around 35 countries under the same domain helvetas.org (e.g. helvetas.org/de/schweiz or helvetas.org/en/laos or helvetas.org/es/bolivia, etc.)
- Multilingualism (DE, FR, IT, EN, ES, PT, RU, UK – incl. SEO aspects)
- Around 25 different page types, e.g. for general content pages, blog area, reports, projects, events, media releases, person pages, jobs, etc.
- Around 30-40 Content Area Types
- Around 20 Snippet Types
- Around 25 Data Object Types
- Integration of donation widget (RaiseNow) and Microsoft Dynamics 365 Forms (Customer Insights App), several analytics, A/B testing & advertising tools
 - MS D365 forms integration and CSS styling
 - RaiseNow Tamaro widget integration with custom functionalities and CSS styling. Upgrades to new widget version approximately 3 times per year (current version: 2.16)
- Hosting is handled by Infomaniak, with server location in Switzerland
- Existing analytics setup (GTM, GA4, with GDPR-compliant cookie strategy, PowerBI dashboards)

The challenge of an international website:

- Usability: internal links lead the user from one country to another (without declaring this)
 - Content is sometimes played out for several countries and in several languages, without a clean structure. In addition, certain Data Objects automatically generate multiple URLs, without clean canonical tags.
 - All users (including those outside Switzerland) are automatically redirected to a Swiss home (e.g. helvetas.org/en/switzerland) when calling helvetas.org. Automatic location-based redirects to the countries were disabled in 2024 as we ran into problems with Google SERPs.
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