

Request for Proposal (RFP): Development of APOPO's New Website

- **Issued by:**
APOPO
[Website URL: https://apopo.org](https://apopo.org)
 - **Date Issued:**
October 3rd, 2025
 - **Proposal Submission Deadline:**
November 10th, 2025
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1. Introduction

- APOPO is a Belgian non-profit headquartered in Tanzania that saves lives through scent detection technology. Our HeroRATs and HeroDOGS are deployed in life-saving roles:
 - Landmine & explosive detection
 - Tuberculosis screening
 - Search & rescue
 - Wildlife detection
 - Herotrees – reforestation and community health
 - Research & innovation in detection technologies
 - Over 25 years, we've impacted 10+ countries—finding and removing landmines and screening communities for TB. As governments reduce funding, we rely more on public fundraising. Our website currently generates ~€825k/year (part of € 1.2M total public income). **We aim to triple that, raising at least €2.5M by 2028.**
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Target Audience

- Individual donors and supporters
 - Institutional funders and foundations
 - Government, research, and humanitarian partners
 - Media and communications and partners
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Design Inspiration

- charitywater.org
 - doctorswithoutborders.org
 - wwf.org
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2. Project Objectives

Fundraising & Conversion

- Increase donations through optimized user journeys and donation flows
- Multi-currency donations through various payment options/portals
- Integrate with WooCommerce, Odoo CRM/email, and Google Analytics

SEO, Multilingual & Content Strategy

- Improve SEO across website
- Launch a multilingual site with SEO in mind (EN, DE, FR, ES, PT, NL), ensuring high-quality translations and precise implementation of hreflang tags to prevent cross-language competition in search rankings.
- Create department-based UX for each program (Landmines, TB, Search & Rescue, Wildlife Detection, HeroTREES, Innovation, and others)
- Advise on pillar pages in culturally relevant languages (e.g., Swahili, Dutch, Khmer, Amharic) to honor legacy ties and improve local engagement

Design, Performance & Accessibility

- Deliver a modern, striking design aligned with APOPO's existing brand
 - Improve the overall user journey, optimized for desktop, mobile, and tablet
 - Ensure top-tier security, accessibility, and performance of website
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3. Scope of Work

Impact & Intended Outcomes

Strategic Impact

- Triple public fundraising income from ~€825K/year to at least €2.5M/year by 2028
- Reinforce APOPO's credibility with a website that meets institutional standards for security, accessibility, and technical performance — ensuring trust from users, donors, partners, and media

Donor Engagement

- Accelerate adoption and donations — connecting donors to tangible impact
- Strengthen donor retention via improved subscription continuity and personalized communications
- Empower storytelling across programs to showcase APOPO's work in landmine clearance, TB detection, wildlife protection, and disaster response, etc.
- Expand global reach through multilingual content and localized donation options

Future-Ready Development

- We invite forward-looking proposals for features and functionality that anticipate evolving donor behaviors and fundraising trends over the next 3–5 years — including mobile-first giving, express checkout, AI-driven personalization, possible gamified engagement, and emerging payment methods

1. Current features and areas for improvement - What we have and need to review, improve, or further develop

Design & Development

- Review and audit the backend and provide guidance on what needs to be improved, optimized, restructured, removed, added to, etc. Keeping in mind that we will continue to use Wordpress and WooCommerce and with existing integration with Odoo.
- Review current hosting & infrastructure
- The website will be hosted on APOPO's existing environment (Plesk, IONOS Cloud)
- The selected agency will receive access to the hosting server
- Agencies may also propose improvements to the current server setup (performance, security, scalability) as part of their offer
- Optimize and streamline navigation to improve user journey
- Responsive, mission-driven design for Desktop/Mobile/Tablet
- Donations and recurring gifting setup
- Rebranding review and analysis
- ADA/WCAG-friendly (Accessible)
- Advise and implement plugins for A/B testing, heatmaps, user behavior tracking, and others

Donation & E-commerce Features

- Monthly/recurring donations (WooCommerce Subscriptions)
- One-time donations (fixed amounts + custom amount entry)
- Automated donor receipts and invoices
- Personalized thank-you / confirmation emails
- Adoption programs (HeroRATs/HeroDOGS) with recurring gift logic, additional top-up, and PDF certificate generation, and send as a gift option to recipient's email (with personalized message)
- HeroTREES, RescueRATs program one-time/monthly recurring with PDF certificate generation, and send as a gift option to recipient's email (with personalized message)
- HeroGifts (like "A Basket of Bananas" or "Clear 30SQM of Minefield") with PDF certificate generation, and send as a gift option to recipient's email (with personalized message)
- Donation cart/checkout with cross-sells and upsells, possibly to make a single donation recurrent "Make this monthly?").
- Multi-currency support (EUR, USD, GBP, CHF, etc.), GeoIP for Automatic local Currency/language
- Payment gateways: Stripe, PayPal, credit card, Mobile Payment, Express payments (Link, Google Pay, Apple Pay, and SEPA (Based on the Actual Stripe and PayPal payment methods), local payments based on location
- Automated Tax Deduction Receipt currently just for USD donors

Fundraising & Engagement Tools

- Gifting workflow: ability to personalize and send gifts to another recipient's email
- Automated emails for soon-to-be ending/expired: card/yearly one-time donation/adoption, etc.
- Abandoned cart email and workflow

Integrations

- Existing integration with Odoo, Google Analytics 4, & Tag Manager for performance, conversions and e-commerce tracking
- Cookie Consent (WebTofee) for GDPR compliance and script blocking
- WooCommerce cookie domain as [.apopo.org](https://apopo.org)
- Newsletter signup/Contact us forms

Security & Performance

- GDPR compliance
- SSL, WAF, backups > (Wordfence, recaptcha)
- Fast page load (<3s), optimized Core Web Vitals
- CDN (Cloudflare/IONOS integration if applicable)
- Caching plugin (likely WP Rocket or similar)
- Image compression and lazy-loading or imagify plugin
- Single Sign-On & Sessions

SEO

- Strong domain authority with quality backlinks
- Clear content hierarchy and internal linking
- Semantic markup and optimized metadata
- Preserved SEO value via 301 redirects
- Landing page keyword strategy aligned with donor intent

Donor Dashboard

- Profile & preferences: name, email, address, comms opt-ins configuration
- Donation history: one-time + recurring; filters by campaign; download receipts & certificates (PDF)
- Manage subscriptions: upgrade/downgrade amounts, pause/cancel, update card (Stripe, PayPal)

2. Priority additions and development for impact and growth - What we don't have and want to develop

Design & Development

- Advise on new design creations for all templates using the existing Wordpress Astra theme.
- Segmented site sections for each department
- Multilingual rollout with SEO in mind

Donation & E-commerce Features

- Alternative giving options (e.g. Donor-Advised Funds, stock donations, planned giving, Klarna) can these be integrated into the site, and advise on possibility of crypto donations

Fundraising & Engagement Tools

- Peer-to-peer fundraising campaigns (also referred to as DIY fundraising)
- Donation tracking dashboards (WooCommerce reports, integrated with GA4)
- Use of GiveWP or Donations for WooCommerce

Content Migration & Strategy

- If needed, propose a clear migration strategy
- Migration should maintain a lot of existing content with SEO in place
- Develop storytelling and content structures for all programs to ensure clarity, emotional impact, and donor engagement across Landmines, TB, Wildlife, and others
- Create flexible, high-conversion landing pages to support campaigns, emergencies, and seasonal fundraisers, with a user-friendly CMS that enables the marketing team to build and update pages independently without relying on design support.

SEO

- Maintain SEO by preserving current rankings and traffic through intact or improved URL structures, content hierarchy, internal and external links, meta descriptions, keyword-reflective slugs, H1s, H2s, and other key components during possible content migration
- Maintain Semantic markup, metadata, searchable content
- Manage 301 redirects to maintain SEO value
- Audit current SEO performance and propose improvements taking into account GEO.

Centralized Donation Platform (WordPress Multisite)

Topology & URLs: Main Domain apopo.org

- Multisite: one network, possible use of subdomains or subdirectories per program: i.e. landmines.apopo.org, tb.apopo.org, wildlife.apopo.org, herotrees.apopo.org, rescue.apopo.org. Central donations only: donate.apopo.org (the only site with WooCommerce + checkout)
- Apopo.org, mainly institutional site with link to the different programs and donation domain
- If we go with subdomains, all “Donate” CTAs on program sites would deep-link to donate.apopo.org with campaign params (e.g., ?campaign=landmines&amount=50&recurring=monthly)
- Shared user table with SSO across subdomains; donors log in once
- Department sites remain content-only

Donor Dashboard

- Fundraising (P2P): donors can create a personal fundraiser page (goal, story, photo), get a unique URL, show a progress bar, and share to social
- Team fundraising: optional team pages rolling up to a campaign
- GDPR self-service: export data, delete request flow

AI Features

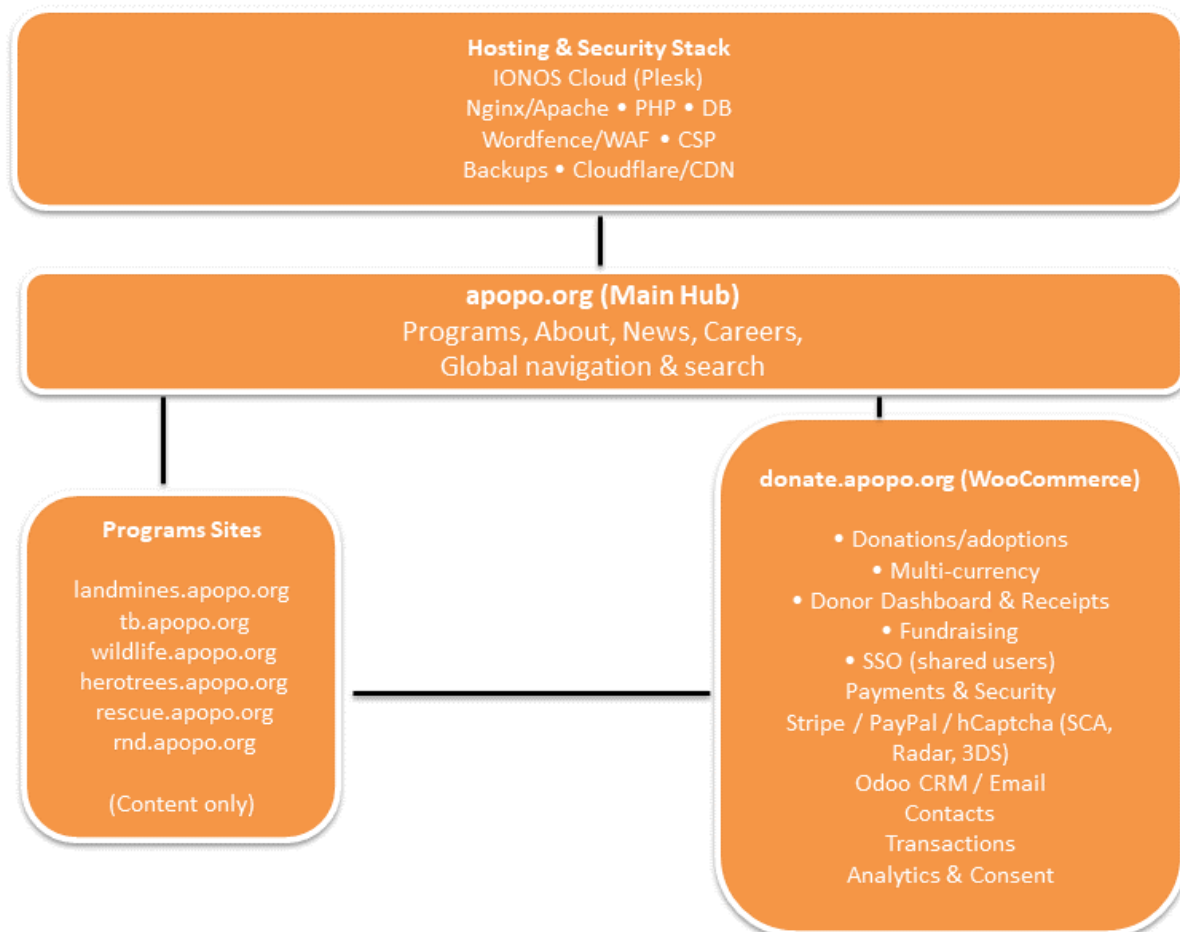
- AI translation: machine-translate pages into EN/DE/FR/ES/NL/PT, editor approves before publishing
- Better site search: multilingual, across entire web
- Smart donation prompts: suggest default amounts / monthly vs one-time based on basic context.
- Abandoned checkout helper: gentle nudge or help text if a donor stalls
- Adopt/Donate via ChatBot with express payment and minimal donor information
- FAQ chatbot “HeroBOT” (Ask the site): answers questions using APOPO’s pages/docs and a How to Donate/Adopt, cancel a monthly donation, etc.

Subscription Continuity (Must-Have)

- Goal: All current monthly subscriptions continue charging without any action from donors and with no data loss if moving to the new architecture (i.e. from apopo.org to donate.apopo.org)
- Gateways unchanged: Keep the same live gateways (Stripe, PayPal). Maintain customer IDs/payment method IDs continuity (Stripe Customer. PM tokens)

Proposed Multisite Architecture (to review and discuss with agency)

Multisite Architecture



Suggested Phased Development Approach

Based on the features outlined above and to ensure continuity, scalability, and strategic impact, we recommend structuring the website development in three stages:

Stage 1 – MVP (Minimum Viable Product)

As part of Phase 1, the selected agency will be required to conduct a comprehensive backend audit of our existing digital infrastructure. This includes a thorough review of our current WordPress setup, database structure and performance, installed plugins (including their functionality, compatibility, and security), Astra theme configuration, and Elementor page builder usage. The audit should also assess our hosting environment (currently on Plesk/IONOS Cloud), server performance, security protocols, caching and performance optimization, payment and donation integrations (e.g., WooCommerce, Stripe, PayPal), third-party tools such as Odoo and CRM systems, backup and recovery processes, and SEO architecture. The goal of this audit is to identify technical risks, performance bottlenecks, and opportunities for improvement that will inform the design and development phases of the project.

After the backend audit, we suggest starting with a streamlined version of the site focused on fundraising continuity and core donation functionality. This should include:

- Homepage with essential information about APOPO
- Structured overview of key programs
- Most popular donation options with a simple 2–3 step cart and checkout
- Basic integrations (WooCommerce, CRM, Analytics)
- Minimal multilingual setup (EN + ES)

This phase prioritizes speed, stability, and uninterrupted revenue generation while minimizing complexity during launch.

Stage 2 – Engagement & Conversion Features

Once the MVP is live, we recommend expanding functionality to deepen donor engagement and increase conversion. This could include:

- Donor dashboard
- Peer-to-peer fundraising tools
- Team fundraising: optional team pages rolling up to a campaign
- Extended multilingual setup (i.e. FR, NL)

These features will enhance user experience, strengthen donor relationships, and open new fundraising channels.

Stage 3 – Experimental & Optimization Features

In the final phase, we invite proposals for innovative features that differentiate the brand and explore emerging channels. These may include:

- AI-powered chatbot

- Smart donation prompts and abandoned checkout recovery
- TikTok donation integration and gaming-for-good modules
- Gamification elements

These enhancements can be introduced post-launch to assess ROI.

4. Roles, Collaboration & Communication Protocols

Internal IT Team (APOPO):

- Maintain overall control of hosting (Plesk, IONOS Cloud)
- Handle user management, backups, domain/DNS, and security monitoring
- APOPO IT to Act as first-line support for internal issues
- Responsible for integrations
- Ability to report, track technical issues and bug & guaranteed response/resolve times based on impact/risk critical levels

Internal Marketing and Comms Team (APOPO)

- Provide content and copywriting support for landing pages, program sections, and donor flows
- Review and approve wireframes, mockups, and page structures
- Supply brand assets, tone guidelines, and storytelling frameworks
- Collaborate on SEO continuity, including redirects, metadata, and keyword alignment
- Coordinate multilingual content review and translation support
- Test donation flows, cart, and checkout, and other transactional functionalities
- Offer feedback on UX, accessibility, and emotional impact from a donor perspective
- Participate in reviews and milestone check-ins

Agency Partner (Partner):

- Responsible for website design, development, and ongoing bug fixes related to their work
- Advise on performance/security improvements to the hosting setup when needed
- Provide technical documentation and handover
- Ongoing server maintenance as an optional service

Issue Handling & Escalation:

- Day-to-day issues logged via an agreed collaboration tool (Jira, Trello, Smartsheet, internal Ticketing System)
- Critical issues (website down, donation checkout errors, security vulnerabilities) escalated immediately to both the agency and the internal IT team
- Regular check-ins (weekly/bi-weekly during build, monthly post-launch) to review tasks and progress

Decision-Making:

- Strategic decisions (budget, major design/architecture changes) taken by the Marketing/IT Manager with input from the agency
- Technical implementation decisions taken collaboratively, with APOPO IT having final say on hosting/server setup

Timeline & Milestones

- Submission proposal: 10th of November, 2025
- Development & Integrations: Jan 2026
- Testing, Content Migration & Soft Launch: April – June 2026
- Public Launch: by end of Q2 2026

Budget

- We encourage proposals that differentiate between essential and optional features within this range
- Submit a maintenance and support proposal contract post launch. Maintenance and support contract is optional if a fair agreement can be made

Proposal Requirements

Include in your submission:

- **Agency Profile:** Experience with NGOs or donor-focused charity websites
- **Team Bios:** Roles and relevant expertise
- **Design Proposals & Wireframes:** Provide a draft sitemap alongside wireframes for a few key page types (e.g. homepage, program page, donation landing page, checkout page) to demonstrate proposed site architecture and user journey
- **Project Plan:** address new website structure, layout, and design, and taking into account the department-based information architecture using subdomain or subdirectory
- **Timeline & Roadmap:** Aligned with APOPO's milestones
- **Budget Breakdown:** Full cost estimate with optional features
- **Post-Launch Support:** SLA plan and optional maintenance proposal

[*Submit proposals here](#)

Submission Instructions

- Deadline: November 10th, 2025

[*Submit proposals here](#)

Follow-up: Shortlisted agencies may be invited for interviews or presentations

Evaluation Criteria

- NGO/global donor experience
- Expertise in user-centric, mission-focused design
- Strong visual design portfolio
- Technical capabilities (WordPress, WooCommerce, Odoo)
- Track record of meeting deadlines
- Transparent and fair pricing (non-profit discount if applicable)

Internal Project Leadership

- Board Marketing Committee – strategic oversight
- Marketing Manager / IT Manager – agency liaison