

## **Request for Tender (RFT): IDS Website Redesign and Development**

Issued By: The Irish Deaf Society (IDS)

Date: December 12th, 2025

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### **1. Executive Summary and Project Background**

The Irish Deaf Society (IDS) is the national Deaf-led representative organisation for the Deaf community in Ireland. The IDS seeks to commission a supplier to plan, design, and develop a modern, fully accessible website, replacing its current outdated WordPress platform.

The strategic imperative for this project is the **critical importance of Irish Sign Language (ISL)** as a primary communication method. The current site, despite its comprehensive content, suffers from an **Engagement Barrier** where essential policy information is buried in deep navigation, often relying on **dense text** that dilutes its impact and obscures the "Deaf Lived Experience" for both members and donors. The new website must solve this problem.

We are seeking a partner who can deliver a modern WordPress platform that meets high technical standards and, crucially, excels in **digital accessibility (WCAG 2.1 AA)** and the integration of **Irish Sign Language (ISL) video content**.

**Our budget for this project is €30k & VAT.**

### **Key Project Requirements**

This project is a full rebuild of our existing WordPress site and includes the following essential requirements:

- **CMS:** Development using the latest stable version of **WordPress**.
- **Core Functionality:** Integration and optimization of **WooCommerce** (for course sales and donations) and **Mailchimp** (for email marketing).
- **Strategic Focus: Dual-Content Design:** The successful tenderer must propose a clear, innovative strategy for simultaneously presenting **all content in both English text and ISL video**, ensuring neither format is secondary, particularly on mobile devices.

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- **Compliance:** The delivered platform must be ready for a third-party **WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility audit**.
- **Strategic Goal:** The design must effectively communicate the **Deaf Lived Experience** to support our advocacy work and fundraising efforts.

## Submission Details

Interested suppliers are invited to review the full Request for Tender (RFT) document.

Your proposal must address all requirements detailed in the RFT and include the following key components:

1. A detailed proposal outlining your approach to the **Dual-Content Strategy (ISL/Text)**.
2. Three relevant **Case Studies** demonstrating expertise in high-level accessibility, WordPress, and e-commerce.
3. A comprehensive **Cost Breakdown** and **Project Timeline**.

**Deadline for Submissions: Friday, January 30th, 2026, at 5:00 PM GMT**

Enquiries:

All technical and procedural questions/enquiries regarding this RFT should be submitted via email to [ceo@irishdeafociety.ie](mailto:ceo@irishdeafociety.ie) by Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

We look forward to reviewing your proposals and partnering to deliver a highly accessible and impactful website for the Irish Deaf community.

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## 2. Project Scope of Work

The successful tenderer will be responsible for the following phases:

1. **Discovery & Planning:** Finalize Information Architecture, detailed user flows, content strategy, and ISL video integration standards.
2. **UX/UI Design:** Creation of high-fidelity wireframes and responsive design mockups, optimized for accessibility and the dual-content strategy.
3. **Technical Development:** Development of the new site using the latest stable version of WordPress, integrating all required functionality and third-party systems.

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4. **Content Migration:** Migration of existing content, including all WooCommerce data.
5. **Testing & Deployment:** Comprehensive functional, accessibility (UAT), cross-browser testing, and secure launch.
6. **Training & Documentation:** Provision of detailed user manuals and training for IDS staff.

### 3. Core Technical Requirements

The new platform must be a **complete, clean rebuild** on the latest stable WordPress version, focused on a modern, lightweight, and highly secure architecture.

| Requirement Area                       | Specification   | Notes  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Content Management System (CMS)</b> | <b>WordPress</b> (latest stable version).   | The project is a <b>full rebuild</b> ; no patching of the old theme is acceptable.   |
| <b>E-commerce &amp; Payments</b>       | <b>WooCommerce</b> and online forms for payment (Must be retained, optimized, and secured). | Primarily used for <b>membership, course sales (ISL classes), donations and Raffle ticket sales</b> . Complex features are <b>not</b> currently required, but the architecture must support future scalability.                    |
| <b>Forms</b>                           | Sign-up forms for email subscription linking to MailChimp.                                  |  |
| <b>Content &amp; Data Migration</b>    | Full, seamless migration of all content and transactional data.                             | Estimated scope: <b>100 to 150 structured pages</b> and <b>20-30 courses/products</b> . Migration of customer data must be conducted in full compliance with <b>GDPR</b> requirements. Tenderers must detail their secure process. |

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| Requirement Area | Specification  | Notes  |
|------------------|--|--|
| Video Hosting    | The system must integrate with <b>external video hosting (e.g., Vimeo or YouTube)</b> .  | The IDS will provide all ISL video files; tenderers must integrate with the preferred external host.   |
| Hosting & Domain | IDS retains domain ownership.  | Tenderers must provide a quotation for a recommended <b>high-availability, secure managed WordPress hosting solution</b> for a minimum of 12 months, including a <b>secure staging/testing environment</b> . (Hosting and related costs are in addition to the stated project budget). |
| Search           | Effective and user friendly site search  | Explore search function page takeover with prompts   |
| Mobile First     | Mobile first approach to design and presentation   |  |
| SEO & Redirects  | Implementation of best-practice SEO and a comprehensive plan for <b>301 redirects</b> for all old URLs to maintain search ranking and authority.   |  |
| Licensing        | All proposed plugins, including the video player solution, must be <b>open-source or commercially licensed to the IDS</b> , ensuring the IDS retains full ownership and control post-launch. |  |

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## 4. Strategic & Design Requirements (Accessibility & ISL)

### 4.1. Accessibility Standards (Mandatory)

The website must achieve a minimum standard of **WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance**. The design must resolve the poor responsiveness and inaccessible interface issues present in the current, dated template. **No Irish Language (Gaeilge) content is required.**

### 4.2. Dual-Format Content Strategy (Crucial)

The design must employ a clever and effective strategy to present **all content** in two distinct, primary formats: **Irish Sign Language (ISL) Video** and **English Text**. This resolves the **Communication Barrier** by elevating ISL video from an embedded addition to a format of parity.

- **Content Parity:**
  - For **Policy/Publication pages** (long documents), the ISL video should sign a **concise, accessible summary** (approx. 2-5 minutes).
  - Explore a **floating (docking) ISL window or an ISL icon** to open/close the video. It would give Deaf users quick access to ISL content but also keep the layout clean for those who prefer text. A consistent ISL icon across the site so people can spot ISL content quickly, a simple on/off toggle for ISL where appropriate, so people can choose what works for them.
  - For **standard informational pages**, the ISL video must sign the **full English text content** to maintain full parity.
- **Mobile Experience:** On mobile screens, the ISL video must be prioritised without impacting on access to the **English text** (full width). Solutions to this should be explored in the design stage and may include a **small, persistent dockable/ floating icon or player** to maintain readability.

### 4.3. Communicating the Deaf Lived Experience

The design must feature engaging layouts for **case studies, member stories, and impact reporting** that directly counter the current reliance on policy archives. These must be easily locatable and prominently featured to:

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- Function as a robust **case for support**, seamlessly linked to donation and membership calls to action.
- Clearly articulate "**What We Are Doing For You**" to the Deaf community, translating policy and service reviews into accessible, real-world updates.
- A clear place for community stories or lived-experience pieces so the site feels more Deaf-led and less policy-heavy.

## 5. Project Management & Compliance

| Requirement                       | Detail  |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Key Decision Makers</b>        | The project will be managed by the <b>IDS Project Lead</b> . Final approval on design mockups and UAT will require sign-off from a nominated <b>IDS Board Sub-Committee</b> , which may require up to two weeks for review.   |
| <b>Accessibility Verification</b> | The final developed site will be subject to an <b>independent, third-party WCAG 2.1 AA audit</b> (or an equivalent expert manual review) to ensure full compliance before final sign-off. IDS will organise this audit independently and the cost is not included in the stated project budget. |
| <b>Staff Training</b>             | Training must be delivered via <b>at least two remote or in-person sessions (min. 4 hours total)</b> , including screen-recorded materials. Focus areas: managing the new content components, and <b>maintaining WCAG compliance</b> .  |
| <b>Post-Launch Handover</b>       | A comprehensive <b>Post-Launch Handover</b> report and technical documentation must be provided, including all server access details, security protocols, and a full license key inventory.   |

## 6. Tender Submission Requirements

Tenderers must submit a comprehensive proposal addressing all points outlined in the Specification:

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| Required Component                           | Detail  |
|--|---|
| <b>A. Company Profile &amp; Experience</b>   | Introduction, team structure, and legal status. Confirmation of the <b>availability of the proposed project team</b> for the entire duration. Face to face project meetings will be required in our offices in Cabra, Dublin. |
| <b>B. Relevant Case Studies</b>              | <b>3 examples</b> demonstrating expertise in: 1) WCAG 2.1 AA compliance, 2) Complex e-commerce (WooCommerce), and 3) Handling dual or complex media (video or multi-format content, sign language videos an advantage).       |
| <b>C. Project Methodology &amp; Timeline</b> | A detailed, phase-by-phase plan and a realistic month-by-month timeline.  |
| <b>D. Dual-Format Content Strategy</b>       | A specific written proposal detailing the chosen <b>visual and technical approach</b> for the simultaneous ISL Video and English Text presentation. Include visual examples or wireframe sketches.                            |
| <b>E. Technical Specification</b>            | Detailed list of proposed technologies and integration strategy, including compliance with <b>GDPR</b> for data handling.   |
| <b>F. Cost Breakdown</b>                     | A fixed-price quotation for the entire scope of work, clearly itemized by phase. Include an optional cost for a <b>12-month post-launch support/maintenance contract</b> .  |

## 7. Tender Evaluation Criteria

The IDS Board will assess proposals based on a scoring system out of **100 points**.

| Criteria   | Weighting (Points) | Key Consideration   |
|--|--------------------|---|
| <b>A. ISL/Accessibility Expertise &amp; Strategy</b> | <b>40 Points</b>   | Quality of the proposed dual-format strategy and proven track record. Tenderers must include a section detailing their <b>accessibility design philosophy</b> . |

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| <b>Criteria</b>                                  | <b>Weighting (Points)</b> | <b>Key Consideration</b>   |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| <b>B. Technical Solution &amp; CMS Knowledge</b> | <b>25 Points</b>          | Suitability of the proposed WordPress architecture, security plan, GDPR compliance details, and proficiency in complex integrations. |
| <b>C. Project Methodology &amp; Experience</b>   | <b>20 Points</b>          | Clarity of the project plan, realism of the timeline, and relevant case studies.   |
| <b>D. Value for Money</b>                        | <b>15 Points</b>          | Competitiveness and clarity of the cost breakdown relative to the scope and quality of the proposed solution.                        |

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