



Wellies.org.nz

Web Re-development

Request For Information

About The Wellies:

The Wellies were set up in Jan 2006 to attempt to build an informal expat network based locally in Wellington, specifically for IT professionals. We aim to provide this network in a spirit of goodwill, assistance and support.

The Wellies fulfil our purpose in two ways - firstly to provide useful, informal help, advice and contacts to those IT professionals emigrating to Wellington; secondly to create a business and social network for newly arrived and established IT professionals already in Wellington.

Purpose of this RFI:

The Wellies are looking for assistance to realise their vision as above, by redeveloping our website to add more functionality and interaction between its members. This document aims to be a technical starting specification for a web-development company.

We would like respondents interested in assisting with The Wellies with our Phase 2 Re-development to compile a **short capability statement** (not more than 10 pages) based around the selection criteria and summarising their thoughts around how they would redevelop the site. Technical diagrams and recommendations are encouraged.

The Wellies Committee will then look to select **one** firm to assist in compiling a business case for presentation to Wellington City Council Economic Grants team, including a project plan, timescales and deliverables.

The main Selection Criteria are:- technical expertise, assistance with developing the overall vision, experience of social networking sites, ability and history of delivering within budget or for fixed price, professionalism and reliability of the respondent, and overall cost. While being based in or near Wellington is not a key criteria, the Wellies are clearly looking for interactive discussion while compiling the business case, which would necessitate face-to-face discussion.

Potential budgets will be discussed with those firms who believe they can meet the above criteria and fulfil the main vision and scope, however ability to deliver and work with The Wellies are more important criteria than cost alone.

Although funding for The Wellies website redevelopment is not guaranteed, it does fill every aspect of one of Wellington City Council's (and New Zealand's) key economic drivers, that of skilled migrant attraction and retention. The Wellies have been encouraged by the Council to progress redevelopment of our website, and we have executive sponsorship both within the Strategic Advisory teams and the Executive Committee.

The Department of Labour is also aware of the initiative, and will be involved in the evaluation of potentially rolling out the Wellies model to a wider audience, including other skilled migrant shortage areas.

Contact:

Please direct all questions and responses to Tom LeGrice, via admin@wellies.org.nz

Limited technical discussion available throughout process with Russell Mitchell – Tech Advisor via russ@theruss.com

Prospective firms are encouraged to examine the www.wellies.org.nz website. Registrations of firms so they can examine the member list and noticeboard areas will be approved with prior request to the above email address.

The Wellies reserve the right to amend these timelines and scoring at any time during the process.

Timeline:

RFI Issued – 20th June 2007

Q&A, Discussion Period – 20th June – 15th August 2007. Face to face discussion with Tom available 20th June-3rd July & 6th – 15th August (due to out of country commitments). Email/ Skype conversation available throughout.

Responses Close – 15th August 2007

Selection of Partner – 31st August 2007

Business Case Submittal to WCC Economic Grants – est by end of September

Business Case Approval Decision – est by end of year

Work on Website Re-development Begins – est by end of year.

Scoring Weighting:

Technical expertise – 20%

Assistance with developing the overall vision – 20%

Experience of social networking sites – 20%

Ability and history of delivering within budget or for fixed price – 15%

Professionalism and reliability of the respondent – 15%

Overall cost – 10%



Introduction:

The Wellies is a voluntary organisation based in Wellington primarily orientated around expat IT professionals new to the city, allowing them to network with established expats and locals alike.

It has grown hugely since its inception in January 2006 and website launch in August 2006. Current membership is around 300 people, with approximately 15-25 new people joining every month. This is trending upward.

The crux of the network is the system of "Mentoring", where new members are manually matched up to existing members with similar IT skills, where they work in the same specific IT sector, like Web Developers or DBA's for example, or simply by living in the same locality or enjoying the same hobbies. The "Mentor" will have already agreed to make themselves available and should be able to help out the new member in any way they are able, not just concerning employment.

Hitherto, the organisation has been heavily geared towards helping expats in their search for suitable employment in the Wellington IT sector, and providing a first friendly point of contact for expats upon arrival. To this end the current **wellies.org.nz** website mostly fulfils this requirement with its contacts database, events and jobs notice boards and introduction to Wellington Life pages.

Currently however, the extent to which members interact with the site and consequently interact with other members is limited to registering with the site and attending the odd meeting. We see much potential in the development and automisation of the mentoring concept as well as with member-to-member contact inside and outside of the employment arena.

We would now like to see a new system, comprising new functionality in order to expand the services we're able to offer to expats and to better operate the "Mentor" system, with an emphasis as much on elements of everyday life as obtaining employment.

We'd like to be able to allow members to search for other members in the context of work, sport, hobbies, travel, interests etc, with search results displayed in a graphical "Spider Map" instead of the conventional tabular or bulleted list. We'd also like to see the ability for members to create "Interest Groups" of Football teams, Chess Players or Kayakers for example, with each group having calendar, forum and contact exchange functionality.

Important to bear in mind is that the new system would need to be designed in such a way as to allow it to be transferred into virtually any other occupation and geographical location; consequently the transferred system would be named and accessed differently.

For example, the initial and expanded deployment of the system will be Wellington specific and might focus on expat IT, Education and Health professionals and might be accessed via URLs like: <http://it.wellies.org.nz>, <http://edu.welles.org.nz> and <http://health.wellies.org.nz> respectively. We would like to be able to licence or otherwise permit others to manage the system in another city – Auckland for example, where the URL, members and the system's data would be physically or virtually separate from the Wellington system.

Additionally however - there is the potential for the need for some communication between these otherwise geographically disparate systems, so the need to leave open the possibility of XML based web services for the transfer of data between such systems would be required.

The System:

The wellies.org.nz website currently only allows a finite amount of interaction between registered members, restricted to occasional job-postings and announcements of various kinds. We now wish to vastly improve the website's functionality and scope to incorporate a lot of new sub-systems for registered members in the style of the following:

- **General Functionality:**

- WYSIWYG Job posting by any member
- WYSIWYG Announcement/event posting by administrator(s)
- Bulk email sending to all members by administrator(s)
- System location and system 'domain' specific news via external RSS into the homepage (RSS sources configurable by the administrator)
- Ability for members of a slightly different type to the conventional system user – to create an account as a representative Employment Contact for any company, solely to enable searching of members CVs, where their job seek status is set to "Yes".

- **Manual Member Login/Account Functionality:**

- Account to be created upon initial login with a base level of data required at the outset (* - mandatory)
- Login/logout from all pages/sections
- Contact details add/edit *
- Arrived from & Current location *
- Date of arrival *
- Residency status etc
- Seeking employment? *
- D.O.B *
- Gender *
- Area of expertise (domain specific, so IT would comprise a list of IT occupations, Education a list of Educational occupations etc) *
- Upload a photo/ s
- Mentor Availability *
- CV Upload (RTF, HTML, PDF and searchable version)
- Group creation/ registration function – as in "Would you be interested in joining a group/ society?" (see the "Groups" section below)

- Ability for members of a slightly different type to the conventional system user – to create an account as a representative Employment Contact for any company, solely to enable searching of members CVs, where their job seek status is set to “Yes”.
- **Groups**
 - Members can create virtual social groups orientated around any subject, sport or activity. The group’s creator becomes the group’s organiser or coordinator. The group’s members comprise other Wellies system members as well as those who may in reality simply be colleagues or friends of the Group’s organiser but not relevant to the Wellies system in any other way. **Group specific functionality should comprise:**
 - Group members and administrators of groups may bulk email other specific members of their group
 - Post calendar events, fixture results and notices
 - Group specific message board. **Note:** If possible, where a message board existed elsewhere prior to a Wellies specific group being setup, group organisers should be able to somehow “point” the Wellies message board there. This could be perhaps linked within an overall window, or via RSS feeds if possible
 - The ability for group organisers to authorise someone else to temporarily or permanently take over the organiser function of that group, or set up other committee members (treasurer, social secretary etc) as appropriate.
- **Automatic Member Login/Account Functionality:**
 - A record of no. Times accepted Mentor request & who they have mentored
 - Length of time user registered with the system
 - Email reminders sent periodically to members not currently accepting buddy requests: ‘are you still available to mentor? – Please login and change your status’, or ‘A new member from London has just registered, you don’t have anyone you’re currently mentoring at the moment, would you like to mentor them?’ etc.
- **Search Functionality:**
 - Mentor request form, linked from search results
 - Mentor rating form, for ex-buddied members to rate their system-allocated buddy.
 - Graphical “Spider Map” instead of tabulated results. Results are in the form of members photos, resized on the fly according to a calculation of search query relevance and individual member weighting, embedded in a Flash or similar graphical environment. A weighting can be thought of as a members suitability for recommendation for buddying someone, **A member has a stored, individual weighting comprising:**
 - Number times accepted a mentor request = higher weighting
 - Number people willing to mentor simultaneously = higher weighting
 - Amount of time registered with the system: More time = higher weighting

- More recent site activity = higher weighting
 - Number times refused to mentor while set as “available to buddy” = lower weighting.
 - Ratings from previous mentored members: Higher rating = higher weighting.
- Selecting a users photo in the spider map displays that member’s complete profile: No. People mentored, no. Times refused a mentor, location, occupation, gender – basically, everything that comprises a members account as well as a link to a “mentor request” form.

Accessibility and Standards:

- XHTML Transitional compliant.
- Accessible to users with low visual acuity.
- As much as possible accessible to users of non-graphical browsing software.
- As much as possible accessible to users of non-mouse pointing devices such as tablets and pointers.