

USC Dornsife

Dear USC Dornsife Faculty and Staff,

The program to redesign our website and develop the first brand platform for the College has resumed after being put on hold for budgetary reasons during the pandemic. The revived project will bring much-needed updates to our website, a critical communication tool for the College that has not undergone a comprehensive upgrade in more than a decade.

This time around, we will be working in partnership with the USC central communication leadership team. This new approach will allow us to use some of the latest tools that are being developed for a new USC website. It will also substantially reduce USC Dornsife's costs while ensuring that we still have our own distinctive identity.

The project is expected to be completed by October 2022 and will include:

- A new content management system (CMS), WordPress, that will be easier to operate and more flexible than our current CMS
- A newly designed website with a contemporary look that's much easier to navigate
- Brand guidelines for how we write and speak about USC Dornsife

Susan Chang in Dornsife Technology Services and Michelle Boston from the Office of Communication are already cleaning up nonfunctional sites and will be working with website administrators from departments, centers, institutes and offices — and faculty when they wish — to prepare their sites for migration to the new CMS. This should reduce technical difficulties and allow each entity to configure its own website within our new design and brand standards.

For anyone contemplating retaining an outside design firm to overhaul their website, especially if it involves implementing your own CMS, I encourage you to postpone your project and work with our team to meet your needs. (By all means, continue with routine updates using our existing system.)

I realize this may cause a delay, but working with our team will be free of charge and will ensure that your site is in compliance with our new brand and design standards. Major design and/or branding work undertaken now may well have to be revised when we transition to the new site. Also, DTS is only able to support those sites that use the USC Dornsife CMS — either the one we use now or, after the transition, WordPress.

I will keep you up to date as the project develops. In the meantime, feel free to contact the USC Dornsife Office of Communication at communication@dornsife.usc.edu with questions, concerns or suggestions.

Best wishes,
Lance

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USC Dornsife

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