

**CALIFORNIA ACHIEVING A BETTER LIFE EXPERIENCE (“ABLE”) ACT BOARD
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (“RFP”)**

**529A Strategic Planning Consulting
RFP No. ABLE 01-19**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
September 3, 2019**

1) Can companies from outside the USA apply for this (i.e., India or Canada)?

The only requirements are that the bidding firm must meet all of the minimum qualifications in the RFP. If the firm is registered and able to do business with the State of California, they may submit a proposal.

2) Do we need to come over there for meetings?

There is an expectation that the selected firm will be available for in-person meetings.

3) Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside the USA (i.e., India or Canada)?

The RFP does not include any requirements regarding the location of the work being performed.

4) Can we submit the proposals via email?

For proof of received date, all proposals must be submitted in person or via regular mail.

5) Is there an incumbent for these services?

No, this is a new service the Board is seeking and there is no incumbent.

6) Page 9 states "a) Provide an overview of the firm including mission statement and vision statement, number of years' experience providing investment consulting, and what services firm will bring to this agreement." Would you consider removing the reference to 'investment consulting'? Based on the scope of work identified the RFP, we believe highly qualified resources could be proposed and successfully complete the tasks without prior investment consulting experience?

Agree, please see Addendum No. 1.

7) Page 9 states "Questions should be answered for each relevant partner or subcontractor to the extent applicable if a Proposer is a consortium or is using subcontractors". Do subcontractors that are individual consultants (not part of a firm/company) need to respond to these questions?

Yes, all principle contributors should be listed and questions apply to them as well even if they are independent contractors.

8) Does the ABLE Act Board anticipate travel outside Sacramento? If yes, where will travel be required? How many trips will be needed?

No, travel outside of Sacramento is not required.

9) The budget is \$22,500 including \$2,500 for travel. What amount of travel is expected, and to what locations, for how many potential meetings or events?

Depending on where the bidder is located, it may be necessary to travel to Sacramento in order to participate in the in-person meetings with CalABLE staff. Travel may also be needed in reporting findings at an upcoming board meeting. Overall, I would say no more than 2-3 trips to Sacramento.

10) Is travel time billable?

Travel costs, which are also included in Attachment 3, shall be set in accordance with the CalHR rates for comparable classes and no travel outside the State of California shall be reimbursed unless prior written authorization is obtained from the Board.

11) The engagement budget is \$21,000 for services, and 130 consulting hours; less than one week per month for six months. Is this amount of time sufficient to contribute the desired consulting support?

Yes, the expectation is that the contract may not take a full six months to complete. The duration was selected in order to ensure that all work would be completed well before the contract expires.

12) Would it be possible to quantify the hours expected for these two tasks, in terms of number of hours expected to be in meetings with staff and other stakeholders?

- Facilitate in-person work session with CalABLE staff to develop strategic framework
- Development of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats ("SWOT") analysis that stratifies strategic opportunities and provides prioritization and timeline.

The time assigned to either of these items is left to the bidder's discretion to ensure that all deliverable are completed within the total time allotted.

13) Do you expect the consulting firm to offer investment advice? Please clarify if this is part of the desired scope of services, as indicated below.

- Proposer must hold and maintain all licenses and registrations required by applicable federal and state laws for businesses offering investment and municipal advisory services.

No. Please refer to Addendum #1.

14) We are a California-certified small/microbusiness with three employees. Is it absolutely required to have five references of similar work, or may we bid if we have three recent references?

I am willing to amend the five reference request to a minimum of three to accommodate the solicitation of diverse bidders. Please refer to Addendum #2.

15) Per Section 4.2a Describe Proposer's experience advising boards. May advising of State Agency/Department or State Control Agency experience be used in place of a "Board?"

Yes.

16) Per Section 5 Cost Proposal, Paragraph 3 – Travel costs included in Attachment 3... Please clarify the total cost includes travel in the six month total \$22,500. Is the \$2,500 dollars for the travel a fixed amount that must be spent by the Proposer? Does the Proposer have to use the fixed amount of \$2,500 for travel? Or, can that number be adjusted downward if Proposer believes that travel amount is high and believes the travel expenses can be reduced?

Yes the total cost includes travel in the six month total of \$22,500. It is not mandatory to spend it all. It can be adjusted downward, but cannot be used for other cost categories.

17) Attachment 3 Cost Proposal Worksheet... Is the Proposer required to show "overhead rate" and "fringe benefits" if it is included in the rate paid for the direct labor?

No.

18) On page 10 of the RFP the following statement is made: "the total amount of the contract shall not exceed \$22,500 every six months." My question is (a) Do responses to the RFP need to fulfill all items delineated in the Scope of Work and Key Activities and Deliverables (RFP pgs. 3-4) and is that work to be accomplished in a maximum of 130 hours (Item 5, p. 10) in six months for a maximum of \$22,500? or (b) Is completion of Scope of Work and Key Activities and Deliverables to be accomplished in two six-month periods (as alluded to in RFP Sec 1.5 Term of Agreement on p. 4), with CalABLE making a maximum of \$22,500 available in each of two six month periods?

(a) Yes and (b) No.

19) What methods have they used in the past for this type of project?

This is the first time undertaking.

20) Why are they seeking outside facilitation at this time?

Limited staff requires use of contractors for specified roles.

21) How many people (and who) will be involved from the agency?

3 CalABLE staff members, 3 STO staff members, and Liaison with the Board.

22) Please describe the desired output format?

Microsoft Office Documents.