Hope, Opportunity, Perseverance, & Empowerment (HOPE) for Children
901 P St, Suite 411B Sacramento, CA 95814

Request for Proposals (RFP) No. HOPE03-25
Program Administrator

RESPONSES TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS

August 20, 2025

The following information is provided in response to questions received by the California HOPE for Children Trust Account Program Board regarding Request for Proposals No. HOPE03-25 (RFP) for a Program Administrator.

1. What data will be used to confirm the eligibility or enrollment of individuals? Will the required data be readily available from the CA Treasurer's office (or other State entity)?

   HOPE will be confirming the data and provide information to the Program Administrator for creation of the HOPE accounts. HOPE is working with various agencies on data sharing agreements to ensure receipt and scrubbing of necessary data for foster youth and COVID-bereaved population. HOPE will also coordinate with local school districts to disseminate information to potential eligible youths.

2. Can you elaborate on how VistaShare Outcome Tracker is used?

   Outcome Tracker, offered by VistaShare LLC, is used as the recordkeeping platform for the Program Administrator. It is used for securely transferring and managing data, managing accounts, communicating directly with HOPE participants, designing a customized online portal, and running reports, queries and surveys.

   The expectation is for the Program Administrator to use Outcome Tracker, or a comparable platform with the minimum capacity and qualities offered with VistaShare's Outcome Tracker. The platform should be integrated to allow for

back-end administration and front-end user experience. It should offer an online recordkeeping platform to be utilized by the Board in administering HOPE accounts and provide an online portal for participants to access and engage with their HOPE accounts.

For more details, refer to Section 1.3(1)(C)(ix) and 1.3(1)(C)(xi) in HOPE's Request for Proposals No. HOPE03-25 (RFP), and the forthcoming addendum to the RFP, to be posted by close of business on Friday, August 22, 2025, and/or visit https://www.outcometracker.com.

3. Can you provide further clarity on the experience you want covered via this RFP vs. what Outcome Tracker already provides?

   Refer to response to question 2.

   What do you imagine the participant experience being?

   The participant experience is anticipated to allow for a HOPE participant to visit the Program website, as provided by the Contractor, and to access their HOPE account through the online portal, as provided through the online recordkeeping platform integrated with the Program website. The website and online portal, each hosted by a different party, should be seamless to the participant.

   Will their full experience exist via infrastructure built from this RFP or do you anticipate them going between this RFP's infrastructure and Outcome Tracker's?

   The participant experience should be seamless, and participants should not be aware of the change between the Program website managed by Program Administrator and the online participant portal managed by the backend recordkeeper.

4. Is there any plan to add financial education to this program?

   Yes. Financial Education will be built through philanthropy.

5. In the previous RFP, there was a budget allocation for building out a Learning Management System (LMS). In this new RFP, no budget is allotted or mentioned for that purpose. Is it correct to conclude that the "Outcome Tracker" now serves as that system?

No, Outcome Tracker (or a comparable platform) is the recordkeeping platform for back-end administration and front-end user experience.
Additionally, what was the reasoning behind removing the budget for the LMS and opting for the Outcome Tracker approach?

Budget discussions for the State indicated there may be cuts to certain programs. HOPE was identified as one of those programs, and experienced significant cuts to its initial one-time funding, resulting in these changes to the RFP.

6. Will there be a plan/ funding for after the five-year contract of this RFP for HOPE to secure funding to serve all the children identified as eligible?

   The RFP will serve the first three (3) years (or potentially six (6)) of the Program's existence. Prior to the end of the contract term, there will be a new request for proposals (RFP) issued for similar investment and program administration services.

   HOPE anticipates continuous funding of $15 million per year, of which $14.25 million is allocated to seed accounts for eligible youth and $750,000 is allocated for administration of the Program.

7. We do not see "Outreach" included in the Scope of Work on this rfp. Is this correct?

   That is correct. A separate marketing and outreach request for proposals will be forthcoming.

8. Can the State share the reasons for the re-release of this RFP, which was originally issued in late 2024?

   Based on budgetary changes impacting HOPE, this RFP was re-issued.

9. From a banking and payments standpoint, what are the reporting requirements?

   Reporting requirements are outlined in the sample contract. Refer to response to question 24.

10. At the start of the program in 2026 and for each subsequent program year, how much will the HOPE Account be capitalized with?

Initial capitalization will be approximately $100 million, with ongoing appropriation of $14.25 million per year to fund HOPE accounts.

11. At the time of withdrawal, what is the approximate amount that each participant will be eligible to receive in 2026 dollars and in future years adjusting for inflation?

    Initial accounts will be funded at $3,000.00 each. This amount will adjust overtime based on inflation but will always equate to the purchasing power of $3,000 today.

12. On an annual basis, how many participants does the State anticipate will be eligible for withdrawal?

    In year one, it is anticipated that 9,000 participants will be of age to withdraw funds from their HOPE accounts. Each year after, it is anticipated that between 3,000-5,000 participants will become eligible to withdraw funds from their HOPE accounts. Participants have from the age of 18 to their 27th birthday to make withdrawal requests.

13. The Government Code section 16430 only speaks to fixed-income investments. For program recipients with +10 years before withdrawal of funds, can a portion of the fund's assets be invested in equities to allow for balanced growth over time?

    The HOPE statute authorizes investment of funds not currently designated for distribution but limits these investments to eligible securities listed under Government Code section 16430. While §16430 permits the same fixed-income instruments in which the Pooled Money Investment Account (PMIA) invests, PMIA is maintained in short term, high credit quality and very liquid fixed income securities within 16430. HOPE funds are restricted to the same universe of securities as PMIA, but HOPE could choose to invest in longer-dated or lower credit quality fixed-income securities to (theoretically) achieve a higher yield on its funds.

    Is it preferred for the quarterly and annual correspondence with the Contractor / Financial Advisor to be virtual or in-person?

    In-person.

14. Should the investment account for the HOPE Account be a pooled, omnibus, or individual account for each program participant?

This will be determined between HOPE and the selected Contractor.

15. Please specify what payment types are defined as electronic transfers?

    Refer to the RFP under EXHIBIT A (Standard Agreement) (iv)

16. Please define the requirement for resumes on all identified key personnel directly involved in providing services and how that extends to subcontractors.

    As outlined in the RFP, it is required that Attachment 5 be completed and submitted along with professional resume for all individuals who will exercise a significant role under this RFP and are assigned to this contract, including those who will be responsible for reviewing or otherwise influencing the work of individuals assigned to this contract (Key Personnel). Key Personnel may include subcontractors. Refer to the RFP.

17. Will the contractor be responsible for holding program funds (pre-investment and incentive-related) in escrow or a similar structure? If so, are there restrictions on the type of financial institution or account required?

    Contractor should hold funds in a master holding account in an investment product as defined in their proposal and that meet Government Code section 16430 requirements.

18. The RFP states that the Contractor must "develop and recommend fee-competitive investment options" that comply with Government Code Section 16430. Can the State clarify whether investment firms must be formally included in the proposal as named subcontractors, or if the Contractor may identify and finalize the investment partner(s) post-award in coordination with the Board?

    All subcontractors, including investment partner(s) must be identified and disclosed in the Bidder's proposal.

19. Would you reconsider allowing this RFP to be submitted electronically?

    Proposals must be submitted in hard copy, as outlined in the RFP.

20. Could you please provide an electronic copy of the Payee Data Record (std. 204) form as the link in Attachment 7 does not work?

    The Payee Data Record (Std. 204) can be accessed here:

https://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dgs/fmc/pdf/std204.pdf.

21. Could you please provide an electronic copy of the Bidder Declaration (GSPD 05-105) form as the link in Attachment 12 does not work?

    The Bidder Declaration (GSPD-05-105) can be accessed here: https://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dgs/fmc/GS/PD/GSPD05-105.pdf

22. Of the estimated 46,552 youth eligible at launch, how many will be immediately eligible to take a distribution?

    Refer to response to question 12.

23. What is the amount of money expected to be invested at launch and what is the program's ongoing annual appropriation?

    Refer to response to question 10.

24. Section 1.3, C (iii) [page 3] Please explain any IRS and/or FTB tax reporting requirements. Will contractor be required to send participants any type of tax notice (i.e.1099-MISC)?

    Pursuant to the Welfare and Institution Code (WIC) Section 11157(f), HOPE funds "..deposited and investment returns accrued in a HOPE trust account....shall be exempt from consideration as income and resources pursuant to Section 18997.56". WIC section 18997.56 details, in part, that one-time lump sum withdrawals from HOPE accounts are exempt property to the extent permitted by federal statute for all programs under WIC. Currently, it is not anticipated that large-scale reporting will be a substantive duty of the selected Contractor. However, HOPE will look to the Program Administrator for guidance on this matter (as well as its own internal resources) and should reporting requirements be necessary at the federal or state level, the expectation would be that the Contractor will help facilitate notices as a necessary part of its duties as the Program Administrator.

25. Section 1.3, C (v) [page 4] Reporting requirements include "Program participation, including accounts claimed…". Our understanding from other similar programs is that all participant data would be held in Outcome Tracker and not available to the Program Administrator for reporting purposes. Can you confirm our understanding that Board staff would be responsible for pulling participant level reports from Outcome Tracker?

This is correct.

26. The contractor is expected to create and maintain a public website (Section 1.3, C (xi)) which feels misaligned with the limited requirements of this RFP. In similar programs, the public website is robust and constantly evolving as messages are refined which is best managed when the party doing the marketing creates and maintains the public website.

(a) Would the Board consider removing the public website requirement from this RFP and placing it with the party doing the marketing to ensure messaging alignment, efficiency, and effectiveness?

No.

(i) If not, would the Board consider amending this RFP so that the successful contractor would be required to stand up the initial public website with final and approved images and copy provided by the Board and, after a period of six months post website launch, the contractor would transfer the hosting and ongoing maintenance to the Board or Board's assignee?

This may be a possibility that can be determined with the selected contractor and the HOPE staff.

(b) If the requirement for a public website remains as stated, please expand on how the Board contemplates that the contractor create and keep the website in line with the Program's marketing materials and messaging at launch and over time. Can the Board commit that Board staff will furnish all final and approved images, copy, etc. to the contractor?

All marketing materials and collateral will be provided by the HOPE program.

(c) Section 1.3, C (xi) [page 4] Please expand on the requirement that the public website be a "multilingual mobile-optimized website." Does the Board contemplate and approve of the use of generic translation technology (i.e. Google Translate) or does the Board require the public website to be recreated in multiple languages? If the latter, please identify which languages the Board requires.

Generic translation services are sufficient.

(d) Section 1.3, C (xi) [page 4] Please confirm that "integrate with an online portal" is limited to ensuring that the public site provides a hyperlink to the Program's instance of Outcome Tracker?

Yes.

(e) Section 1.3, C (xi) [page 4] Please clarify the Board's requirement of an "eligibility portal, eligibility tool." To create eligibility tools, the contractor would need common data elements for the various eligible participant types. Will the Board have this type of data? Does the Board contemplate that the website would have data intake functionality?

The Board will have this type of data and does contemplate that the website would have data intake functionality.

(f) Section 1.3, C (xi) [page 4] In relation to the public website, please explain what an "account dashboard" means. If all participant data is in Outcome Tracker, Board staff would create a HOPE program dashboard using Outcome Tracker tools and participants would access their personal dashboard by logging into Outcome Tracker. Can the reference to "account dashboard" be deleted?

Yes. Refer to forthcoming addendum to the RFP to be posted by close of business on Friday, August 22, 2025.

(g) Section 1.3, C (xi) b) [page 5] Please explain what the requirement of "a fully operational Program website to begin enrolling youth…" means. Our understanding from other similar programs is that Board staff will identify eligible participants, load the data into Outcome Tracker and the public site will include a hyperlink to Outcome Tracker so that participants can login to Outcome Tracker, see their information and request a distribution. Does the Board contemplate that the contractor will develop an enrollment process on the public site where youth can input information and upload documents to apply for the program? If so, unless the data uploaded goes directly to the Board and not to the contractor, this is a structure we would be unable to support.

Your understanding is correct. The Board does not contemplate requiring an online enrollment process on the public website, but potentially a mechanism for allowing for the upload of documents to be directed to the Board for further attention. Refer to responses to questions 27(d), 27(e), and 27(f).

(h) Section 1.3, C (xi) c) [page 5] Please explain what “Program website with full integration to the participant portal” means. Our understanding from other similar programs is that the public website provides general information and that includes a hyperlink to Outcome Tracker where participants can access their account information.

As it relates to the Program website, this is the full integration that the Program conceives, a link to the Outcome Tracker dashboard. Refer to response to question 27(d).

28. The RFP states that contractors must provide an integration with Outcome Tracker by VistaShare. Would the state entertain a bid without using Outcome Tracker? Essentially if a contractor was able to provide a superior, holistic solution, encompassing all the recordkeeping services currently offered by Outcome Tracker and all the services requested in the RFP, would the state consider that bid?

    Yes. Refer to forthcoming addendum to the RFP to be posted by close of business on Friday, August 22, 2025.

29. In order to leverage current assets and take advantage of economies of scale, has the state considered jointly bidding out the HOPE Program and CalKIDS?

    Not at this time.

30. Does the state want the contractor to provide a customer call center that would take calls from participants and the general public? If so, what is the estimated volume of calls?

    No.

31. Will the program start with $50 million? If so, will the entire $50 million be allocated to the eligible participants on day one of the program?

    Refer to response to question 10.

32. How much will be allocated to new eligible participants in subsequent years?

    Refer to response to question 10.

33. Is there an estimated number of accounts that will take distributions each year?

Refer to response to question 12.

34. Is the beneficiary subject to the Patriot ACT CIP requirements?

    No, the State of California owns the HOPE account until the distribution of funds. There are no reporting requirements per statute for money issued to HOPE participants. Refer to response to question 24.

35. At the time of distribution, does the contractor need to provide tax reporting to the beneficiaries?

    Refer to response to question 24.

36. What is the estimated volume of statements, tax forms, checks, and forms mailed to participants?

    We believe this volume will be very low in the initial phases of the Program. Refer to response to question 12.

37. Where will the beneficiary data come from and what are the expected file formats and data elements?

    Data will come from state agencies and individual attestation to the Program. Data elements that are authorized by state agency partners will be shared. File format and elements will be agreed upon between HOPE, and the Program Administrator.

38. Is any historical information required to be converted?

    No.