REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

FOR

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS CONSULTANT

NAVAJO COUNTY, ARIZONA

Contract Number F17-01-13

January 13, 2017
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Notice is hereby given that Navajo County is requesting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) for a firm to provide employee benefits consultation and administration.

SOQ from firms or teams must be submitted in a sealed envelope. The RFQ number and the respondent’s name and address should be clearly indicated on the outside of the envelope, to be delivered to the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors at the Navajo County Governmental Center, 100 E. Code Talkers Drive, Holbrook, AZ 86025, on or before February 8, 2017 at 10:00 AM local Arizona time. The original SOQ and four copies (five total) must be submitted. Additionally an electronic copy in PDF format (on compact disk or USB flash drive) must be submitted. All SOQ will be opened and publicly verified at that time.

A complete copy of this RFQ and possible amendments may be obtained by calling (928) 524-4322, or a copy may be picked up during regular business hours at the Procurement Office, 100 East Code Talkers Drive, Holbrook, Arizona 86025 or www.navajocountyaz.gov - procurement. Respondents are invited to review the information and to submit their Statements of Qualifications in accordance with the criteria established within this RFQ. Written questions regarding this RFQ must be received by the Procurement Office no later than January 26, 2017. Questions may then be responded to by written amendment to this document. Oral statements or instructions shall not constitute an amendment to the RFQ.

All submittals must be received by the due date and at the submittal location specified herein. Any response received at the specified submittal location after the due date and time assigned will be returned unopened. The county reserves the right to reject any or all submittals, or to withhold the award for any reason it may determine, and to waive or not to waive any informalities in any submittal. All information regarding the content of the specific submittals will remain confidential until a contract is finalized or all Qualifications are rejected.
SECTION I - PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND SCOPE

Navajo County is soliciting qualifications from qualified, licensed and professional firms to provide benefit consulting and brokerage services for its current and future employee benefit and group insurance plans. Employee benefits would include; group medical, dental, vision, life, AD&D, voluntary/supplemental products, and an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The successful candidate will consult and advise the County in establishing strategic goals with respect to employee benefits and wellness, develop strategies to achieve strategic goals, and measure performance, including results (outcomes). Assists in ongoing management of vendor contract compliance. Provides advice and consultation on trends and strategies to improve overall health of employee populations and manage cost efficiency and effectiveness. The successful candidate will be named the County’s Broker of Record for their employee benefit plans. Plans have an annual renewal date of January 1.

Background

Navajo County currently provides insurance and employee benefit plans to approximately 600 eligible employees. Coverage is also available for dependents, leave of absence employees and qualified COBRA participants.

SECTION II – EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Consultant team will be selected through the two-step qualifications-based selection process, as described in ARS § 41-2538. Firms interested in providing Consulting services for this project must submit an SOQ that addresses the following issues:

A. Qualifications – Information, Experience and Qualifications of the firm or team.

1. Identify principal shareholders, partners or members.
2. Identify period of time Consultant firm has been operating in business offering similar consulting services.
3. Identify four recent (within the past three years) comparable projects which the firm or team has successfully completed.
4. For each project listed above, provide:
   a. Description of the project,
   b. Any unique attributes that illustrated “out of the box” solutions.
   c. the role of the firm or team member,
   d. the date of the work,
   e. the name of the owner, and
   f. Reference information (current names and telephone numbers).

B. Proposed Design – Understanding of the project, and approach to performing the required services.

1. Discuss the major issues (pain points) your team has identified from looking over our data, and how you intend to address each issue.
2. Describe your team’s organization and consultant management approach during each phase. Briefly describe systems to be used and team experience in managing of similar projects.

3. Completeness of Proposal

C. **Customer Service** – Experience and Resource Availability of key personnel assigned to the project.

1. For each key person identified, provide a short resume of the person's professional qualifications and experience. Length of service with your firm.
2. Provide each key person's project role and time committed to this project.
3. Provide at least two references for each key person.
4. List any proposed sub-consultants, their qualifications and their role in the project.

D. **Overall Impression** – Overall evaluation of the firm or team and its perceived ability to provide the required services.

This is to be determined by the selection committee members. No submittal response is required.

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**SECTION III –CONSULTANT QUESTIONNAIRE**

The complete Statement of Qualifications submittal will answer the following questions:

1. How many years has your firm been in the benefit consulting business in the State of Arizona?

2. Describe your firm’s experience with municipal or government client groups.
3. Describe your firm’s experience with configuring and implementing self-funded health insurance plans.

4. Discuss who would be assigned as Navajo County’s dedicated service team and how support is provided to Navajo County.

5. How often does your company intend to be on-site at Navajo County?

6. Describe your firm’s actuarial team and the standards they will employ to set IBNR (Incurred but not reported) claims in reserves. Are the actuarial team member’s employees of your firm or are they third party consultants?

7. What cost containment solutions does your firm provide for self-funded plan sponsors?

8. What expertise do you bring to Navajo County regarding Self-funded options? Give an example of your expertise/discuss.

9. Does your firm provide an ERISA attorney? Is that attorney an employee or a third party consultant (please provide name or firm name)? Describe your legal team, what attorneys do you have available?

10. What will you do to ensure Navajo County maintains compliance with laws, rules and regulations in regards to Employee Benefits.

11. Navajo County desires to promote a Healthy Lifestyle Initiative. Describe your firm’s approach and qualifications, including experience, to design a program that would meet the needs of Navajo County’s employee population that possesses a broad range of responsibilities and requirements.

12. Navajo County is interested in the possibility of establishing onsite care facilities for its employees. Describe your firm’s experience with conducting a feasibility study for establishing such a facility. Please provide examples of onsite care facilities that you have established and implemented for your clients as well as a reference we can contact for additional information, including name, title, address, phone and email address.

13. Describe your firm’s experience with selecting and incorporating a PBM (Pharmacy Benefit Manager) in your clients’ self-funded plan design.

14. Describe your firm’s ability to implement, should Navajo County elect to incorporate 403(b) pricing for prescription drugs.

15. Describe your firm’s approach in designing a strategy that enables Navajo County to make the most informed choices when evaluating the requirements of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). What tools does your firm employ to ensure compliance, realize cost savings and maintain flexibility with plan options? Does your firm outsource this analysis effort to a vendor? Or does your firm employ a proprietary analysis model?
16. Describe your account services team. What services do they provide? What differentiates your team from your competitors’ teams? What minimum training and certification do your team members possess? How do they communicate with employees and conduct open enrollment? How do they resolve claims disputes?

17. Discuss your abilities and services regarding claims analysis.

18. Describe your process if you see a 100k+ claim come through on the claims register, what steps will you take?

19. Briefly describe how your company will help Navajo County employees resolve a problem between the employee and the insurance carrier. Do you have a dedicated employee for this function?

20. Describe any preferred carrier relationships that you might have for Stop Loss or non-medical lines of coverage.

21. Does your firm have errors & omissions coverage (amount)?

22. Describe any other employee or professional business services your company can provide on a direct basis.

23. Based on what little you may know about Navajo County’s current benefits and culture, propose a benefits package effective 1 January 2018 with an emphasis on a Healthy Lifestyle. What benefits would you keep? What benefits would you change, if any?

24. What additional cost savings can your company bring to Navajo County?

25. Provide any other information that makes your firm uniquely qualified to serve as Navajo County’s employee benefits consultant.

SECTION IV – SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Firms interested in the Navajo County Employee Benefits Consultant must submit an SOQ which includes a one page letter of transmittal, plus a maximum of twenty pages of response to address the SOQ criteria and questionnaire (excluding resumes, but including an organization chart). Resumes for each key team member shall be limited to a maximum length of two pages, and should be included in an appendix at the end of the SOQ. Please submit the original SOQ plus four copies (five total) and electronic copy by 10:00 AM on February 8, 2017.

All submittals shall be sent or delivered to:

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
Navajo County Governmental Center
100 E. Code Talkers Drive
Holbrook, AZ 86025
Please be advised that failure to comply with the following criteria may be grounds for disqualification and will be strictly enforced:

- Receipt of the SOQ by the specified time and date.
- The correct number of copies including the electronic copy of the submittal.
- Adherence to the maximum page limit.
- Deposit of the submittal in the correct location.

All information in the SOQ shall be machine printed for legibility. Only signatures are to be handwritten. SOQ found to be illegible in the judgment of Navajo County will be rejected.

Navajo County reserves the right to reject any SOQ not properly signed. All SOQ marked as original shall include a transmittal letter signed by an authorized representative of the respondent in ink.

**Fees and Pricing**

**Do not included any fees or pricing related to the project with the SOQ.**

**Integrity of SOQ**

By submitting an SOQ, the respondent affirms:
- That it has not given, offered to give, nor intends to give at any time hereafter any economic opportunity, future employment, gift, loan, gratuity, special discount, trip, favor, or service to a public servant in connection with the submitted SOQ.
- The submission of the SOQ did not involve collusive or other anti-competitive practices.
- The respondent shall not discriminate against any employee or application for employment in violation of any and all applicable law.

**Mistake in SOQ**

A respondent may withdraw the SOQ or correct any mistake by modifying the SOQ prior to the time and date set for receipt.

**Rejection**

Navajo County reserves the right to reject any or all SOQ or any part thereof, or accept any SOQ or any part thereof, and to waive or decline to waive any formality or informality in an SOQ as deemed to be in the best interest of Navajo County. Navajo County expressly reserves the right to reject any or all SOQ or reissue the RFQ.

**Return of Documents**

Any documents submitted in response to the RFQ become the property of Navajo County, and will not be returned.
Disclosure of Data
SOQ will not be open for public inspection until a binding contract is executed with a respondent and all other respondents have been so notified.

SOQ may contain confidential or proprietary data that the respondent does not wish disclosed for any purpose other than evaluation of the SOQ. If so, the respondent shall clearly identify the specific pages of the SOQ to be restricted. Navajo County assumes no liability for disclosure or use of unmarked data, or for the disclosure of marked data if that disclosure is required by law. Unless confidentiality is requested, information submitted in response to the RFQ may be disclosed in response to a request for inspection of public records submitted pursuant to applicable Arizona Revised Statutes.

Protest Policy

A. Right to Protest. Any actual or prospective bidder, respondent, offeror or contractor who is aggrieved in connection with the solicitation or award of a contract shall initially protest to the Procurement Officer.

B. Resolution of Protests. The Procurement Manager issuing the solicitation shall have authority to resolve protests. Appeals from the decisions of the Procurement Manager may be made to the Board of Supervisors.

C. Filing of a Protest
   1. Content of Protest: The protest shall be in writing and shall include the following information:
      a. The name, address and telephone number of the protestant;
      b. The signature of the protestant or its representative;
      c. Identification of the solicitation or contract number;
      d. A detailed statement of the legal and factual grounds of the protest including copies of relevant documents; and
      e. The form of relief requested.

D. Time for Filing Protests
   1. Protests Concerning Improprieties in a Solicitation.
      a. Protests based upon alleged improprieties in a solicitation that are apparent before the solicitation due date shall be filed not less than five (5) working days before the solicitation due date.
   2. Protests shall be filed within ten (10) days after issuance of notification of award or issuance of notice of intent to award.
3. The Procurement Manager, without waiving the County’s right to dismiss the protest for lack of timeliness, may consider any protest that is not filed timely.

4. The Procurement Manager shall give notice of the protest to the successful contractor if award has been made or, if no award has been made, to all interested parties. Interested parties have the right to intervene.

5. Stay of Procurements during the Protest. In the event of a timely protest, the County may proceed further with the solicitation or with the award of the contract unless the Procurement Manager makes a written determination that there is a reasonable probability that the protest will be sustained or that the stay of procurement is not contrary to the substantial interests of the County.

6. Confidential Information
   a. Material submitted by a protestant shall not be withheld from any interested party except to the extent that the withholding of information is permitted or required by law.
   b. If the protestant believes the protest contains material that should be withheld, a statement advising the Procurement Manager of this fact shall accompany the protest submission in accordance with.

7. Decision by the Procurement Manager
   a. The Procurement Manager shall issue a written decision within fourteen (14) days after a protest has been filed. The decision shall contain an explanation of the basis of the decision.
   b. The Procurement Manager shall furnish a copy of the decision to the protestant, by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by any other method including facsimile or electronically, that provides evidence of receipt.
   c. The time limit for decisions may be extended by the Procurement Manager for a reasonable time not to exceed thirty (30) days. The Procurement Manager shall notify the protestant in writing that the time for the issuance of a decision has been extended, and the date by which a decision will be issued.
   d. If the Procurement Manager fails to issue a decision within the time limits, the protestant may proceed as if the Procurement Manager had issued an adverse decision.

8. Remedies
   a. If the Procurement Manager sustains the protest in whole or part and determines that a solicitation, evaluation process, proposed contract award or contract award does not comply with this policy, the manager shall implement an appropriate remedy.
b. In determining an appropriate remedy, the Procurement Manager shall consider all the circumstances surrounding the procurement or proposed procurement including, but not limited to, the seriousness of the procurement deficiency, the degree of prejudice to other interested parties or to the integrity of the procurement system, the good faith of the parties, the extent of performance, costs to the County, the urgency of the procurement and the impact of the relief on the using agency’s mission.

c. An appropriate remedy may include one or more of the following:

d. Decline to exercise an option to renew under the contract;

e. Reject all bids, responses or proposals;

f. Terminate the contract;

g. Reissue the solicitation;

h. Issue a new solicitation;

i. Award a contract consistent with the procurement code; or

j. Such other relief as is determined necessary to ensure compliance with this policy.

9. Appeals to the Board of Supervisors (BOS)

a. An appeal from a decision entered or deemed to be entered by the Procurement Manager shall be filed with the Clerk of the BOS within seven days from the date the decision is issued. The appellant shall also file a copy of the appeal with the Procurement Manager.

b. Content of Appeal. The appeal shall contain:

1. Content of the protest;

2. A copy of the decision of the Procurement Manager; and

3. The precise factual or legal error in the decision of the Procurement Manager from which an appeal is taken.

10. Notice of Appeal

a. The Procurement Manager shall give notice of the appeal to the successful contractor if award has been made or, if no award has been made, to interested parties. Such interested parties shall have the right to request copies of the appeal and to intervene in the proceedings.
b. The Procurement Manager shall, upon request, furnish copies of the appeal to those interested parties.

11. Stay of Procurement during Appeal. If an appeal is filed during the procurement and before an award of a contract and the procurement or award of the contract was stayed by the Procurement Manager, the filing of an appeal shall automatically continue the stay unless the Procurement Manager makes a written determination that the procurement or award of the contract without delay is necessary to protect substantial interests of the County.

12. Procurement Manager Report. The Procurement Manager shall file a report on the appeal with the BOS within seven (7) days from the date the appeal is filed. At the same time, the Procurement Manager shall furnish a copy of the report to the appellant by certified mail, return receipt requested, and to any interested parties. The report shall contain copies of:

   a. The appeal;
   b. Any other documents that are relevant to the protest; and
   c. A statement by the Procurement Manager setting forth findings, actions, recommendations and any additional evidence or information necessary to determine the validity of the appeal.

13. Extension for Filing of Report

   a. The Procurement Manager may request in writing an extension of the time period setting forth the reason for extension.
   b. The BOS’s determination on the request shall be in writing, state the reasons for the determination and, if an extension is granted, set forth a new date for the submission of the report. The BOS shall notify the appellant in writing that the time for the submission of the report has been extended and the date by which the report will be submitted.

14. Comments on Report

   a. The appellant shall file comments on the Procurement Manager’s report with the BOS within seven (7) days after receipt of the report. Copies of the comments shall be provided by the appellant to the Procurement Manager and all other interested parties. The comments must contain a statement or confirmation as to the appellant’s requested form of relief.
   b. The BOS may grant an extension on the time period to file comments pursuant to a written request made by the appellant within the period stating the reason an extension is necessary. The BOS’s determination on the request shall be in writing, state the reasons for the determination and, if the extension is granted, set forth a new date for the filing of comments. The BOS shall notify the Procurement Manager of any extension.
15. Dismissal before Hearing

a. The BOS shall dismiss, upon a written determination, an appeal before scheduling a hearing if:

   1. The appeal does not state a valid basis, including a detailed statement of the legal and factual grounds, for protest; or
   2. The appeal is untimely.

16. Remedies

a. If the BOS sustains the appeal in whole or part and determines that a solicitation, evaluation process, proposed award, or award does not comply with this Code.

SECTION V – SELECTION PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

Navajo County will conduct a two-step qualifications-based selection process. A selection committee will evaluate each SOQ submitted according to the criteria set forth in Section III above. The selection committee will select a short list of no more than three firms or teams from the SOQ’s received. If deemed necessary by the selection committee, each firm on the short list may be interviewed. Navajo County will also perform a due diligence investigation of the firms and teams on the short list.

At the conclusion of the evaluation of SOQ, the interviews (if any), and the due diligence investigation, the selection committee will rank in order of preference the firms and teams on the short list. Navajo County will enter into negotiations with the highest-ranked firm/team and execute a contract upon satisfactory negotiation of fees and contract terms. The firm/team selected will deliver the consulting services through a fixed fee contract for professional consulting, administration and brokerage services.

The following tentative schedule has been prepared for the project:

   SOQ due: February 8, 2017 on or before 10:00 AM local Arizona time
   Selection committee evaluation complete: February 22, 2017
   Contract Recommendation to the Board of Supervisors: February 28, 2017

If Navajo County is unsuccessful in negotiating a contract with the highest-ranked firm/team, the County may negotiate with the second or third most qualified firm, or may decide to terminate the selection process.

SECTION VI – INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Navajo County will require the selected firm or team to execute a professional service contract. Submission of your SOQ shall indicate your firm's ability and agreement to execute a contract and provide the required indemnification and insurance.
SECTION VII – RESERVATION OF RIGHTS BY NAVAJO COUNTY

Navajo County reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any irregularities or informalities in the offers received and to change the evaluation process described in this RFQ if circumstances dictate this or it is otherwise in the best interest of the County to do so. Navajo County expressly reserves the right to undertake any of the following if advantageous to the County:

- Reject any or all SOQ without explanation.
- Withhold the award for any reason it may determine.
- Terminate the RFQ process at any time.
- Reissue the RFQ.
- Extend the time frame for submission of the responses by notification to all parties who are known to have received a copy of the RFQ.
- Request more information from any or all submitting respondents.
- Hold all SOQ for a period of 60 days after the opening date and time, and accept an SOQ not withdrawn before the scheduled date and time for receipt.
- Waive or decline to waive irregularities in any SOQ, or in the RFQ process.
- Decline to enter into a contract with any of the respondents.

SECTION VIII – GENERAL INFORMATION

This RFQ will be advertised in the official county newspaper, the Holbrook Tribune News. All firms submitting an SOQ must refrain from influencing any member of the selection committee to protect the integrity of the selection process. A non-collusion affidavit will be required from the successful respondent.

All cost for preparation, submission and/or delivery incurred by the respondent is the sole responsibility of the respondent and will not be paid by the County.

Questions should be in writing and addressed to:

Interim Finance Director
100 E. Code Talkers Drive
Holbrook, Arizona 86025
paige.peterson@navajocountyaz.gov
Phone (928) 524-4066

Certification Regarding
Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters
Primary Covered Transactions

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 13 CFR Part 145. The regulations were published as Part VII of the May 26, 1988 Federal Register (pages 19160-19211). Copies of the regulations are available from local offices of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

(BEFORE COMPLETING CERTIFICATION, READ INSTRUCTION ON NEXT PAGE)
The prospective primary participant certifies to the best of its knowledge and belief that it and its principals:

(a) Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for disbarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal department or agency;

(b) Have not within a three-year period preceding this application been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a public (Federal, State, or local) transaction or contract under a public transaction; violation of Federal or State antitrust statutes or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;

(c) Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (1)(b) of this certification; and

(d) Have not within a three-year period preceding this application had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated for cause or default.

Where the prospective primary participant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective primary participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Business Name ____________________________

Date ________________________________

By ____________________________________
Name and Title of Authorized Representative

____________________________
Signature of Authorized Representative

SBA Form 1623 (10-88)

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CERTIFICATION

1. By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective primary participant is providing the certification set out below.

2. The inability of a person to provide the certification required below will not necessarily result in denial of participation in this covered transaction. The prospective participant shall submit an explanation of why it cannot provide the certification set out below. The certification or explanation will be considered in connection with the department or agency’s determination whether to enter into this transaction. However, failure of the
prospective primary participant to furnish a certification or an explanation shall disqualify such person from participation in this transaction.

3. The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when the department or agency determined to enter into this transaction. If it is later determined that the prospective primary participant knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency may terminate this transaction for cause or default.

4. The prospective primary participant shall provide immediate written notice to the department or agency to which this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective primary participant learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.

5. The terms “covered transaction,” “debarred,” “suspended,” “ineligible,” “lower tier covered transaction,” “participant,” “person,” “primary covered transaction,” “principal,” “proposal,” and “voluntarily excluded,” as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of the rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the department or agency to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations (13 CFR Part 145).

6. The prospective primary participant agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the department or agency entering into this transaction.

7. The prospective primary participant further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include the clause titled “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion—Lower Tier Covered Transactions,” provided by the department or agency entering into this covered transaction, without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.

8. A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not debarred, suspended, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the ineligibility of its principals. Each participant may, but is not required to, check the Nonprocurement List.

9. Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render in good faith the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.

10. Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 6 of these instruction, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the Federal Government, the department or agency may terminate this transaction for cause or default.