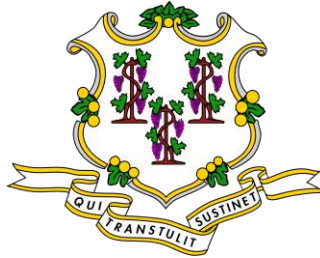


STATE OF CONNECTICUT PROCUREMENT NOTICE



**Request for Proposals (RFP) For
Transportation Services – RFP #833**

RFP Name: Administration and Coordination of Student
Transportation System

Issued By:

Connecticut State Department of Education

October 2021

This Request For Proposal is available in electronic format on the State Contracting Portal by filtering by Organization for CT State Department of Education

<https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

or from the Agency's Official Contact:

Name: Jessica Cabanillas
Address: 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford CT 06103
Phone: 860-713-6575
E-Mail: Jessica.Cabanillas@ct.gov

This RFP is also available on the Agency's website at

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/RFP/Request-for-Proposals/2021-RFPs>.

RESPONSES MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN

December 6, 2021

At 5:00 p.m. EST

The Agency of CT State Department of Education is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

The Agency reserves the right to reject any and all submissions or cancel this procurement at any time if deemed in the best interest of the State of Connecticut (State).

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

■ A. INTRODUCTION

- 1. RFP Name and Number.** Administration and Coordination of Student Transportation System - RFP #833
- 2. RFP Summary.** The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) seeks qualified organizations that can demonstrate the capability to coordinate and administer transportation systems for voluntary interdistrict programs in the *Sheff* Region.

Background

On July 9, 1996 the Connecticut State Supreme Court in the landmark school desegregation case, *Sheff v. O'Neill*, held that the public school students in the City of Hartford attended schools that were racially, ethnically, and economically isolated in violation of the Connecticut Constitution, and urged the State to take prompt steps to seek to remedy the violation. The Plaintiffs and Defendants have entered a series of court ordered stipulations in an effort to address the goals of that litigation, the most recent of which was executed on January 10, 2020 ("Phase IV Stipulation").

The parties to the lawsuit endeavor to significantly increase the number of Hartford-resident minority students in reduced-isolation educational settings, and to move toward meeting the demand of Hartford-resident minority students seeking placement in desegregated educational settings. The goal is to be attained primarily using the following voluntary interdistrict programs: the Open Choice program, which allows students to transfer between Hartford and the suburban school districts when such transfers contribute to the reduction of racial and ethnic isolation; interdistrict magnet schools which presently include Hartford and suburban host magnet schools and regional magnet schools; charter schools; Connecticut Technical Education and Career System (CTECS); and Regional Agricultural Science Centers. These Voluntary Interdistrict Programs are the instruments employed under the Stipulation and Order to reduce racial, ethnic and economic isolation and each require inter-district transportation of students to succeed. This requires the design and implementation of a transportation plan for all voluntary interdistrict programs that encourages and supports the participation of Hartford and suburban students throughout the Greater Hartford Region, while increasing efficiency, and minimizing ride times for all students.

Initially, 22 towns located within Hartford County were identified as the "*Sheff* Towns" for purposes of two-way participation in voluntary interdistrict programs. However, subsequent stipulations allow for two-way voluntary participation in interdistrict programs for Hartford and suburban students with the other "*non-Sheff*" towns that make up Hartford County. In addition, a small fraction of students currently enrolled in voluntary interdistrict programs reside in Middlesex and Windham Counties.

- 3. RFP Purpose.** The intent of this RFP is to retain a qualified organization that can demonstrate the capability to coordinate and administer the transportation systems for voluntary interdistrict programs in the *Sheff* Region and support the financial obligations based on the statutory reimbursement schedule (see sections 358 and 365 of Public Act 21-2).

4. Commodity Codes. The services that the Agency wishes to procure through this RFP are as follows:

- 80000000: Management and Business Professionals and Administrative Services

■ B. INSTRUCTIONS

1. Official Contact. The Agency has designated the individual below as the Official Contact for purposes of this RFP. The Official Contact is the **only authorized contact** for this procurement and, as such, handles all related communications on behalf of the Agency. Proposers, prospective proposers, and other interested parties are advised that any communication with any other Agency employee(s) (including appointed officials) or personnel under contract to the Agency about this RFP is strictly prohibited. Proposers or prospective proposers who violate this instruction may risk disqualification from further consideration.

Name: Jessica Cabanillas
Address: 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103
Phone: 860-713-6575
E-Mail: jessica.cabanillas@ct.gov

Please ensure that e-mail screening software (if used) recognizes and accepts e-mails from the Official Contact.

2. Registering with State Contracting Portal. Respondents must register with the State of CT contracting portal at <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration> if not already registered. Respondents shall submit the following information pertaining to this application to this portal (on their supplier profile), which will be checked by the Agency contact.

- Secretary of State recognition – Click on appropriate response
- Non-profit status, if applicable
- Notification to Bidders, Parts I-V
- Campaign Contribution Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1):
<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Fin-PSA/Forms/Ethics-Forms>

3. RFP Information. The RFP, amendments to the RFP, and other information associated with this procurement are available in electronic format from the Official Contact or from the Internet at the following locations:

- Agency's RFP Web Page
[Department of Education - RFPs](#)
- State Contracting Portal (go to CTsource bid board, filter by "Education, Department of"
<https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/BidBoard>

It is strongly recommended that any proposer or prospective proposer interested in this procurement check the Bid Board for any solicitation changes. Interested proposers may receive additional e-mails from CTsource announcing addendums that are posted on the portal. This service is provided as a courtesy to assist in monitoring activities associated with State procurements, including this RFP.

4. Procurement Schedule. See below. Dates after the due date for proposals ("Proposals Due") are non-binding target dates only (*). The Agency may amend the schedule as needed. Any change to non-target dates will be made by means of an

amendment to this RFP and will be posted on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, the Agency's RFP Web Page.

- RFP Released: October 21, 2021
- RFP Conference: Not Applicable
- Letter of Intent Due: October 29, 2021
- Deadline for Questions: November 1, 2021
- Answers Released: November 5, 2021
- Proposals Due: December 6, 2021
- (*) Proposer Selection: December 20, 2021
- (*) Start of Contract: July 1, 2022

5. Contract Awards. The award of any contract pursuant to this RFP is dependent upon the availability of funding to the Agency. The Agency anticipates the following:

- Contract Term: July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2027

6. Minimum Qualifications of Proposers. To qualify for a contract award, a proposer must have the following minimum qualifications:

The transportation requirements for this request for proposal involves administration of transportation for more than 14,000 students to and from their school of choice or magnet program, involving over 800 routes across more than 50 towns and to more than 185 schools.

- Bidder must have substantial knowledge of and successful experience with pupil transportation systems in both large urban school districts and suburban/rural districts.
- Bidder must have experience successfully administering transportation services in school districts or to educational agencies that have interdistrict educational programming like magnet, charter, technical, or agricultural schools.
- Bidders must have demonstrated organizational capacity and expertise to design and assist in the implementation of this project and provide call center and transportation management support to meet the demand of the *Sheff* Regional system.
- Bidders must have demonstrated experience in the successful implementation of a system with comparable enrollments, geographic considerations, and programmatic needs as indicated herein.
- Bidders must have demonstrated financial resources to support costs of transportation administration and services based on statutory reimbursement schedule (see sections 358 and 365 of Public Act 21-2).

7. Letter of Intent. A Letter of Intent (LOI) is required by this RFP. The LOI is non-binding and does not obligate the sender to submit a proposal. The LOI must be submitted to the Official Contact by e-mail by the deadline established in the Procurement Schedule. The LOI must clearly identify the sender, including name, postal address, telephone number, and e-mail address. It is the sender's responsibility to confirm the Agency's receipt of the LOI. Failure to submit the required LOI in accordance with the requirements set forth herein shall result in disqualification from further consideration.

8. Inquiry Procedures. All questions regarding this RFP or the Agency's procurement process must be directed, in writing, electronically via e-mail to the Official Contact before the deadline specified in the Procurement Schedule. The early submission of questions is encouraged. Questions will not be accepted or answered verbally – neither in person nor over the telephone. All questions received before the

deadline(s) will be answered. However, the Agency will not answer questions when the source is unknown (i.e., nuisance or anonymous questions). Questions deemed unrelated to the RFP or the procurement process will not be answered. At its discretion, the Agency may or may not respond to questions received after the deadline. As this RFP requires a Letter of Intent, the Agency reserves the right to answer questions only from those who have submitted such a letter. The Agency may combine similar questions and give only one answer. All questions and answers will be compiled into a written amendment to this RFP. If any answer to any question constitutes a material change to the RFP, the question and answer will be placed at the beginning of the amendment and duly noted as such.

The agency will release the answers to questions on the date(s) established in the Procurement Schedule. The Agency will publish any and all amendments to this RFP on the State Contracting Portal and, if available, on the Agency's RFP Web Page. At its discretion, the Agency may distribute any amendments to this RFP to prospective proposers who submitted a Letter of Intent.

9. RFP Conference. An RFP conference will not be held to answer questions from prospective proposers.

10. Proposal Due Date and Time. The Official Contact is the **only authorized recipient** of proposals submitted in response to this RFP. Proposals must be received by the Official Contact on or before the due date and time: December 6, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Proposals received after the due date and time will be ineligible and will not be evaluated. The Agency will send an official letter alerting late respondents of ineligibility.

An acceptable submission must include the following:

- One (1) conforming electronic copy of the proposal.

The proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Screening Committee.

The electronic copy of the proposal must be emailed to official agency contact for this procurement. The subject line of the email must read: *Administration and Coordination of Student Transportation System*. Required forms and appendices may be scanned and submitted as PDFs at the end of the main proposal document. Please ensure the entire email submission is less than 25MB as this reflects the Agency's server limitations. Respondents should work to ensure there are not additional IT limitations from the provider side.

The proposal must carry signatures and unsigned proposals will not be evaluated. The proposal must be complete, properly formatted and outlined, and ready for evaluation by the Screening Committee.

Proposals received after the due date and time may be accepted by the Agency as a clerical function, but late proposals will not be evaluated. At the discretion of the Agency, late proposals may be destroyed.

11. Multiple Proposals. The submission of multiple proposals is not an option for this procurement.

II. PURPOSE OF RFP AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

■ A. AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Connecticut State Department of Education is the administrative arm of the Connecticut State Board of Education. Through leadership, curriculum, research, planning, evaluation, assessment, data analysis and other assistance, the Department helps to ensure equal opportunity and excellence in education for all Connecticut students. The Department is responsible for distributing funds to all Connecticut public school districts and operates the Regional School Choice Office (RSCO) that administers the application and placements systems for interdistrict choice schools within the Greater Hartford Region in accordance with the Phase IV Stipulation and Order in *Sheff v. O'Neill* litigation, and any related or future stipulations and orders. The Department also operates the CTECS, although CTECS is scheduled to operate as an independent executive agency in 2022 pursuant to state legislation.

Mission

CSDE's mission is to provide - through leadership and service - insight, expertise, training, encouragement and resources to assist those in the education and related communities to succeed in helping all Connecticut students become effective lifelong learners, able to reach their personal and career goals and become involved, productive, confident and satisfied members of society.

■ B. SERVICE OVERVIEW

- CSDE seeks a qualified organization that can demonstrate the capability to coordinate and administer the transportation systems for participating students of voluntary interdistrict programs in the *Sheff* Region.
- The voluntary interdistrict programs in the *Sheff* Region (collectively referred to as, "*Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs") include (1) Open Choice, a program that allows Hartford students to attend public schools in nearby suburban towns and suburban students to attend public schools in Hartford, (2) 40 Interdistrict Magnet Schools in Hartford and neighboring suburban communities, including (Avon, Bloomfield, East Hartford, Enfield, Glastonbury, Manchester, New Britain, Rocky Hill, South Windsor West Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windsor), and (3) 3 Hartford Region CTECS Schools (AI Prince Technical High School in Hartford, EC Goodwin Technical High School in New Britain, and Howell Cheney Technical High School in Manchester), and 3 Regional Agricultural Science Centers (DF Harris Sr. Agriscience Center at Bloomfield High School in Bloomfield, Glastonbury regional Agriscience and Technology Center in Glastonbury, and Suffield Regional Agriscience Center in Suffield) which are a part of this voluntary effort. Currently, more than 20,000 Hartford and Suburban students across more than 50 towns in the Hartford region participate in these programs. Unique to one of the magnet schools (Greater Academy of the Arts) in Hartford is the schedule of both a full day and half-day program.
- Free bus transportation is provided to most participating Hartford (including prekindergarten students) and suburban students within the transportation zone at an annual cost to the state in excess of \$45 million. Copies of the transportation zone and existing transportation guidelines are attached as Attachment D. Less than one percent of participating students are issued Connecticut Transit System Metro Bus Passes and a small percentage are transported by parents (including suburban resident prekindergarten students) who are compensated at the end of the school year at a rate of \$5 per school day for providing this service based upon application. The majority of students transported to the various voluntary interdistrict programs are transported using school buses or livery vehicles through contracted services.

Both Hartford Public Schools (HPS) and the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) have contracts with a number of vendors to provide such services. These contracts are multi-year and will need to be considered as a regional transportation system is coordinated and administered. HPS provides transportation services for Hartford-resident students attending magnet schools in the City of Hartford.

- CSDE seeks an organization that is knowledgeable about urban and suburban interdistrict transportation systems, and after analyzing current transportation practices in the *Sheff* Region, has the expertise to plan and administer the implementation of a regional transportation system. This transportation system must be efficient, safe and cost effective while supporting the full participation of Hartford and suburban students in voluntary interdistrict programs in the Sheff Region.

■ C. SCOPE OF SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Design and implement a regional transportation system for all *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs in a manner designed to maximize overall efficiency of the transportation system, reduce the length of bus rides for choice program participants, increase participation in voluntary interdistrict programming, afford timely and safe transportation services for participating students.

Route and manage the transportation of participants in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict programs in accordance with national and state industry standards and safeguards and the timeframes identified by CSDE.

The successful applicant will negotiate and contract with appropriate subcontractors to provide transportation assets and regional transportation service in accordance with national and state industry standards and safeguards and within timeframes identified by CSDE. Contracts negotiated for transportation services shall be reviewed and approved by CSDE prior to execution and may not exceed a maximum term of five (5) years.

Collaborate with the *Sheff* Transportation Committee comprised of representatives from CREC, HPS, Bloomfield Public Schools, East Hartford Public Schools, Goodwin University Educational Services, the CSDE, and other applicable stakeholders to improve the overall efficiency and cost of the pupil transportation system, reduce the length of bus rides for voluntary interdistrict *Sheff* program participants, and increase participation in voluntary interdistrict *Sheff* programming.

Assign sufficient knowledgeable staff, as approved by the CSDE, to route and manage the transportation program within timeframes and guidelines established by the CSDE and respond to and successfully resolve parent and school questions and complaints regarding pupil transportation for *Sheff* voluntary interdistrict programming.

1. Organizational Expectations

- The successful proposer will have substantial knowledge and experience with pupil transportation, the Greater Hartford Region, and the system of school choice offerings coordinated through the RSCO.
- The successful proposer will employ sufficient qualified staff to coordinate safe and reliable transportation with reduced bus times to support participation in choice programming and demonstrate the required fiscal stability to meet funding requirements based on statutory reimbursement schedules (see sections 358 and 365 of Public Act 21-2).
- The successful proposer will have the required expertise to route and manage transportation services for *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs with the goal of maintaining bus rides below 60 minutes while maximizing efficiency and reducing costs.

- The successful proposer will have the required expertise to negotiate contracts with transportation providers to meet capacity requirements while maximizing efficiency and reducing cost.

2. Service Expectations

- Administer and coordinate pupil transport for *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programming to support participation in choice programming.
- Route and manage transportation of voluntary interdistrict *Sheff* program participants in accordance with national and state industry standards.
- Establish and maintain a Customer Service Center staffed by skilled and knowledgeable staff to support families participating in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict programs.
- Hours of Operation
 - Provide skilled and timely customer service in the Customer Service Center through immediate access to customer service staff from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. to ensure timely resolution of issues that may arise.
- Collaborate with the RSCO to ensure effective and timely service delivery and response.
- Provide staff and expertise to effectively coordinate transportation services for choice students in the Greater Hartford Region and support schools and families' requirements for timely and reliable service.
- Negotiate cost effective, reliable and efficient transportation services through one or more transportation vendors in a timely manner on behalf of the state of Connecticut.
- Establish and maintain a procedure for timely communications to key stakeholders regarding transportation-related matters, including, for example, inclement weather policies, disruptions or changes to transportation service, scheduling and routing changes, and health and safety concerns
- Provide timely communications to key stakeholders in accordance with established policies.
- Establish, maintain and communicate to the CSDE and key stakeholders a written policy for recording and resolving transportation disputes, including a written appeals procedure with associated timelines.
- Document and communicate all information related to transportation disputes and/or routing decisions upon request by the CSDE and collaborate with the CSDE and other stakeholders to promptly and equitably resolve such conflicts/disputes to support student participation in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs.
- Provide updated guidelines for families, districts and operators regarding transportation policies and procedures, at least annually and more frequently as necessary.
- Collaborate and meet with the *Sheff* Transportation Committee comprised of key stakeholders, including, but not limited to: CREC, HPS, the CSDE, the RSCO, East Hartford Public Schools, Bloomfield Public Schools, Goodwin University Educational Services, and the Open Choice districts in the Greater Hartford Region to support the implementation of the Phase IV Stipulation and Order, or any other stipulation or order in effect, and improve the overall efficiency and cost of the pupil transportation system, reduce the length of bus rides for voluntary interdistrict *Sheff* program participants, and increase participation in voluntary interdistrict *Sheff* programming.
- Conduct regular meetings with operators and districts to address transportation challenges, communicate policies and procedures, and identify efficiencies.
- Collaborate with operators to align bell times of *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs and identify other adjustments to services to facilitate efficient and cost-effective transportation services.
- Develop and implement a policy for before and after-school transportation services to ensure ready access to transportation outside of regular school hours to support student participation in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs.

3. Staffing Expectations

- Transportation Director to provide general overall supervision of the transportation services.
- Customer Service Center with a sufficient number of staff to promptly and knowledgeably respond to Transportation Customers during operational hours.
- Support staff to assist families, choice program students and choice programs operators with transportation issues and concerns. This staff shall be available from 6am to 6pm and will be available to respond to transportation customers during those days and times.
- Other staff as needed to facilitate transportation management to ensure seamless transportation of students in the voluntary interdistrict programming. This may include a Transportation Manager, Routing, Road Supervisor and reporting (Regional Transportation Project Manager).
- Staff with required credentialing, as applicable, based on state and federal laws and regulations.

4. Data and Technology Expectations

- A designated customer service number for purposes of customer service on a daily basis with a sufficient number of designated lines to meet the ongoing operational needs of transportation service.
- Maintain a computerized transportation routing system using an updated software program to accommodate routing for more than 20,000 students, such as Transfinder or similar routing software.
- Develop, maintain, an up-to-date user friendly transportation website to allow families and participating schools/programs to view routes, request changes, or file complaints online. Participating schools will have the ability to order late buses or field trips from the website and other transportation information will be posted on the website.
- Develop and maintain a customer service database that will be used to track all calls including requests for changes and complaints.

5. Budget Expectations

- There is no set amount of funding for this project. The bidder should provide a budget narrative and an itemized detailed budget which estimates of the costs associated with the requested services.

■ D. PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The following performance metrics highlight key priorities that will be analyzed with providers/vendors collaboratively during the life of the contract. This is not an exhaustive list, but rather an indication of significant performance metrics of interest to CSDE. CSDE looks forward to working with providers/vendors to define additional important performance metrics.

- Timely establishment of routes to safely transport pupils designed to minimize ride times and maximize participation in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs.
- Regular access to customer service support by families within hours designated and timely resolution of transportation issues and complaints that arise.
- Development and maintenance of an up-to-date website to communicate information to families.
- Cost effective and efficient contracting of transportation assets and services to support reliable, timely, consistent and safe transportation for school choice participants within the transportation zone.

- Regular and timely communications to key stakeholders regarding transportation policies, service disruption, inclement weather, health and safety and other related issues.
- Financial stability to support transportation services based on statutory reimbursement schedules (see sections 358 and 365 of Public Act 21-2).
- Management of transportation services within the reasonable budgets established by CSDE.
- Regular data reporting in accordance with reasonable requests made by CSDE to monitor and evaluate transportation services and their impact on family participation in *Sheff* Voluntary Interdistrict Programs.

■ E. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT/DATA REPORTING

As part of the State’s commitment to becoming more outcomes-oriented, the Connecticut State Department of Education seeks to actively and regularly collaborate with providers/vendors to enhance contract management, improve results, and adjust service delivery and policy based on learning what works. Reliable and relevant data is necessary to ensure compliance, inform trends to be monitored, evaluate results and performance, and drive service improvements. As such, CSDE reserves the right to request/collect other key data and metrics from providers/vendors.

- RSCO will collaborate with the successful proposer regarding transportation services and such collaborations may include periodic meetings to troubleshoot challenges, review data to identify opportunities for improvements to services and to ensure desired service outcomes.
- The successful proposer will provide timely reports to CSDE that communicate key metrics regarding transportation services, including at a minimum:
 1. An annual data compilation that includes data and information regarding customer service calls (including requests for changes and complaints), student enrollment patterns, ride times, existing transportation routes, as well as current and projected needs and costs to inform funding and programmatic decision-making.
 2. On an annual basis prior to December 1 of each year, survey families and choice program operators/districts to assess transportation services and any impact said services has on participation in voluntary interdistrict programming and provide a summary of results to CSDE prior to February 1 of each school year.
 3. On an annual basis, analyze procedures, processes, policies, and personnel to find additional efficiencies and reduce transportation costs associated with the *Sheff* transportation system upon consultation and approval by the CSDE.
 4. A quarterly report which shall include, but not be limited to the following information:
 - a. Data and information regarding student enrollment patterns,
 - b. Transportation appeals,
 - c. Bus stop changes and exceptions,
 - d. Safety issues, ride times, existing transportations routes, and inclement weather

III. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OVERVIEW

■ A. SUBMISSION FORMAT INFORMATION

1. Required Outline. All proposals must follow the required outline presented in Section IV – Proposal Outline. Proposals that fail to follow the required outline will be deemed non-responsive and not evaluated.

2. Cover Sheet. The Cover Sheet is Page 1 of the proposal. Proposers must complete and use the Cover Sheet form provided by CSDE in Attachment A.

Legal Name is defined as the name of the provider, vendor, CT State agency, or municipality submitting the proposal. *Contact Person* is defined as the individual who can provide additional information about the proposal or who has immediate responsibility for the proposal. *Authorized Official* is defined as the individual empowered to submit a binding offer on behalf of the proposer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto.

3. Table of Contents. All proposals must include a Table of Contents that conforms with the required proposal outline.

4. Executive Summary. Proposals must include a high-level summary, not exceeding 2 pages, of the main proposal and cost proposal. The summary must also include the organization's eligibility and qualifications to respond to this RFP.

5. Attachments. Attachments other than the required Appendices or Forms identified in the RFP are not permitted and will not be evaluated. Further, the required Appendices or Forms must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions will result in disqualification.

6. Style Requirements. *THIS IS AN ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION.*

Submitted proposals must conform to the following specifications:

- Page Size: 8.5"x11" format
- Page Limit: None specified, however, Executive Summary is limited to 2 pages and Main Proposal is limited to 20 pages. Additional attachments are permitted, but total submission shall not exceed 25MB.
- Font Size: 11 point minimum
- Font Type: Arial, Tahoma or Verdana
- Margins: 1"
- Line Spacing: 1.5 spacing

7. Pagination. The proposer's name must be displayed in the header of each page. All pages, including the required Appendices and Forms, must be numbered in the footer.

8. Packaging and Labeling Requirements. n/a

9. Declaration of Confidential Information. Proposers are advised that all materials associated with this procurement are subject to the terms of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the Privacy Act, and all rules, regulations and interpretations resulting from them. If a proposer deems that certain information required by this

RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL prior to submission. In subsection F of the proposal submission, the proposer must reference the section where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *Example: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).

10. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement. Proposers must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the proposer and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. The Agency will determine whether any disclosed conflict of interest poses a substantial advantage to the proposer over the competition, decreases the overall competitiveness of this procurement, or is not in the best interests of the State. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85."*

■ B. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

- 1. Evaluation Process.** It is the intent of the Agency to conduct a comprehensive, fair, and impartial evaluation of proposals received in response to this RFP. When evaluating proposals, negotiating with successful proposers, and awarding contracts, the Agency will conform with its written procedures for POS and PSA procurements (pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-217) and the State's Code of Ethics (pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 1-84 and 1-85). Final funding allocation decisions will be determined during contract negotiation.
- 2. Evaluation Review Committee.** The Agency will designate a Review Committee to evaluate proposals submitted in response to this RFP. The Review Committee will be composed of individuals, Agency staff or other designees as deemed appropriate. The contents of all submitted proposals, including any confidential information, will be shared with the Review Committee. Only proposals found to be responsive (that is, complying with all instructions and requirements described herein) will be reviewed, rated, and scored. Proposals that fail to comply with all instructions will be rejected without further consideration. The Review Committee shall evaluate all proposals that meet the Minimum Submission Requirements by score and rank ordered and make recommendations for awards. The Commissioner of Education will make the final selection. Attempts by any proposer (or representative of any proposer) to contact or influence any member of the Review Committee may result in disqualification of the proposer.
- 3. Minimum Submission Requirements.** To be eligible for evaluation, proposals must (1) be received on or before the due date and time; (2) meet the Proposal Format requirements; (3) meet the Eligibility and Qualification requirements to

respond to the procurement, (4) follow the required Proposal Outline; and (5) be complete. Proposals that fail to follow instructions or satisfy these minimum submission requirements will not be reviewed further. The Agency will reject any proposal that deviates significantly from the requirements of this RFP.

4. Evaluation Criteria (and Weights). Proposals meeting the Minimum Submission Requirements will be evaluated according to the established criteria. The criteria are the objective standards that the Review Committee will use to evaluate the technical merits of the proposals. Only the criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals. The weights are disclosed below.

- Strengths and Qualifications of Organization (20%)
- Scope of Services (20%)
- Staffing/Organizational Capacity (15%)
- Work Plan (15%)
- Financial Profile (15%)
- Cost Competitiveness and Budget Narrative (15%)

Note:

As part of its evaluation of the Staffing Plan, the Review Committee will review the proposer's demonstrated commitment to affirmative action, as required by the Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46A-68j-30(10).

5. Proposer Selection. Upon completing its evaluation of proposals, the Review Committee will submit the rankings of all proposals to the Commissioner or Agency Head. The final selection of a successful proposer is at the discretion of the Commissioner or Agency Head. Any proposer selected will be so notified and awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract with the Agency. Such negotiations may, but will not automatically, result in a contract. Any resulting contract will be posted on the State Contracting Portal. All unsuccessful proposers will be notified by e-mail about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The Agency reserves the right to decline to award contracts for activities in which the Commissioner or Agency Head considers there are not adequate respondents.

6. Debriefing. Within ten (10) days of receiving notification from the Agency, unsuccessful proposers may contact the Official Contact and request information about the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date will be considered "day one" of the ten (10) days. If unsuccessful proposers still have questions after receiving this information, they may contact the Official Contact and request a meeting with the Agency to discuss the evaluation process and their proposals. If held, the debriefing meeting will not include any comparisons of unsuccessful proposals with other proposals. The Agency may schedule and hold the debriefing meeting within fifteen (15) days of the request. The Agency will not change, alter, or modify the outcome of the evaluation or selection process as a result of any debriefing meeting.

7. Appeal Process. Proposers may appeal any aspect the Agency's competitive procurement, including the evaluation and proposer selection process. Any such appeal must be submitted to the Agency head or designee. A proposer may file an appeal at any time after the proposal due date, but not later than thirty (30) days after an agency notifies unsuccessful proposers about the outcome of the evaluation and proposer selection process. The e-mail sent date will be considered "day one" of the thirty (30) days. The filing of an appeal shall not be deemed sufficient reason for the Agency to delay, suspend, cancel, or terminate the procurement process or execution of a contract. More detailed information about filing an appeal may be obtained from the Official Contact.

- 8. Contract Execution.** Any contract developed and executed as a result of this RFP is subject to the Agency's contracting procedures, which may include approval by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). Fully executed and approved contracts will be posted on State Contracting Portal and the Agency website.

IV. REQUIRED PROPOSAL SUBMISSION OUTLINE AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Cover Sheet

B. Table of Contents

C. Executive Summary

D. Main Proposal

E. Attachments (clearly referenced to summary and main proposal where applicable)

F. Declaration of Confidential Information

G. Conflict of Interest - Disclosure Statement

H. Statement of Assurances

A: Cover Sheet

The Respondent must use a Cover Sheet provided in Attachment A.

Legal Name is defined as the name of provider, vendor, CT State agency, or municipality submitting the proposal. *Contact Person* is defined as the individual who can provide additional information about the proposal or who has immediate responsibility for the proposal. *Authorized Official* is defined as the individual empowered to submit a binding offer on behalf of the proposer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto.

B: Table of Contents

Respondents must include a Table of Contents that lists sections and subsections with page numbers that follow the organization outline and sequence for this proposal.

C: Proposer Executive Summary

The page limitation for this section is 2 pages briefly describing how the Respondent meets the eligibility and qualification criteria outlined in the Proposal Overview and a brief overview of why the Respondent should be selected for the activities highlighted in the scope of services.

D: Main Proposal Submission Requirements To Submit a Responsive Proposal:

*****Please note the maximum total page length for this section is 20** (all appendices and other attachments should be referred to in section D and then placed in section E). The Agency Review Committee will not read answers longer than 20 pages in this section.

Strengths and Qualifications of Organization

Organization Description and History: Provide a general overview of your organization including its history and prior experiences engaging with relevant key stakeholders.

- A. Overall Qualifications: Provide a general overview of your organization. What sets your organization apart from your competitors? Why is your organization uniquely qualified to conduct this scope of service?
- B. Experience: Describe the extent of your organization's experience conducting similar services for a public organization. How does that experience relate to the services sought in this proposal?
- C. Management Plan: Describe how management will provide high quality service; the overall management plan for the proposal should speak in terms of systems, procedures and controls that will ensure the partnership will meet its goals and purpose, and how all tasks will be completed in a timely manner.
- D. Appropriate Insurance: A statement that contains a listing of current active business insurance of the organization is sufficient. Certificates of insurance are acceptable, but not required, unless a contract is awarded that specifies this need.

Scope of Services

- A. Describe the proposed services in detail sufficient to demonstrate an understanding of the work to be performed, the partnership needs and the desired results. Proposals must address all of the elements listed in the Scope of Service, and should describe the agency's philosophy, strategies and techniques for integrating each component, paying particular attention to various voluntary interdistrict program options.

Staffing/Organizational Capacity

- A. Project Staff: Describe the team that would provide these services. Indicate key staff to be assigned to the program by name (if known), title, qualifications and job descriptions.
- B. Organizational Chart, Capacity: Indicate, through an organizational chart and supporting narrative, the lines of authority and responsibility related to the proposed program and its components. Include all project staff as well as all management level staff either dedicated to or accountable for each phase of this project. In two pages or less, summarize the relevant qualifications, including experience and expertise of the organization. Factors that should be discussed include: adequacy of financial resources, and overall technical skills and experience that will enable and ensure that required work to be done.

Work Plan

- A. Methodology: Provide a detailed description of your organization's ability, approach, and methodology for this project in line with the RFP objectives and key elements outlined in the scope of service.

- B. Implementation timeline: Provide an implementation timeline for your project, including key milestones related to the scope of service. Include estimates of the timeframe of implementation.

Financial Profile

- A. Fiscal Stability: What is the fiscal health of your organization? Provide any documentation that supports the organizations past, present, and future fiscal stability and its capacity to operate under the reimbursement framework referenced in the RFP. This may include any financial support up to and including audited financial statements.

Cost Competitiveness and Budget Narrative

- A. Complete a budget proposal in its entirety that will enable the effective delivery of the proposed services.
- B. Present a detailed cost narrative that explains the basis and rationale for the costs proposed. Provide assumptions or calculation approaches used to develop the cost proposal.

E: Attachments

See the Proposal Checklist in Section VI-C for a list of relevant attachments. The required attachments must not be altered or used to extend, enhance, or replace any component required by this RFP. Failure to abide by these instructions may result in disqualification.

- a. Résumés of Key Personnel
- b. Audited Financial Statements, if included

F: Declaration of Confidential Information

If a proposer deems that certain information required by this RFP is confidential, the proposer must label such information as CONFIDENTIAL prior to submission. The proposer must reference where the information labeled CONFIDENTIAL is located in the proposal. *EXAMPLE: Section G.1.a.* For each subsection so referenced, the proposer must provide a convincing explanation and rationale sufficient to justify an exemption of the information from release under the FOIA. The explanation and rationale must be stated in terms of (a) the prospective harm to the competitive position of the proposer that would result if the identified information were to be released and (b) the reasons why the information is legally exempt from release pursuant to C.G.S. § 1-210(b).

G: Conflict of Interest – Disclosure Statement

Proposers must include a disclosure statement concerning any current business relationships (within the last three (3) years) that pose a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85. A conflict of interest exists when a relationship exists between the proposer and a public official (including an elected official) or State employee that may interfere with fair competition or may be adverse to the interests of the State. The existence of a conflict of interest is not, in and of itself, evidence of wrongdoing. A conflict of interest may, however, become a legal matter if a proposer tries to influence, or succeeds in influencing, the outcome of an official decision for their personal or corporate benefit. In the absence of any conflict of interest, a proposer must affirm such in the disclosure statement. *Example: "[name of proposer] has no current business relationship (within the last three (3) years) that poses a conflict of interest, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-85."*

H: Statement of Assurances

Proposers must include the Statement of Assurances provided in Section VI-B. Sign and return and place after Conflict of Interest-Disclosure Statement.

V. MANDATORY PROVISIONS

■ A. STANDARD CONTRACT PROVISIONS

Proposers may view the [Comptroller's Office PSA Terms and Conditions](#), which includes generic state contract requirements.

■ B. ASSURANCES

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly gives the following assurances:

- 1. Collusion.** The proposer represents and warrants that the proposer did not participate in any part of the RFP development process and had no knowledge of the specific contents of the RFP prior to its issuance. The proposer further represents and warrants that no agent, representative, or employee of the State participated directly in the preparation of the proposer's proposal. The proposer also represents and warrants that the submitted proposal is in all respects fair and is made without collusion or fraud.
- 2. State Officials and Employees.** The proposer certifies that no elected or appointed official or employee of the State has or will benefit financially or materially from any contract resulting from this RFP. The Agency may terminate a resulting contract if it is determined that gratuities of any kind were either offered or received by any of the aforementioned officials or employees from the proposer, contractor, or its agents or employees.
- 3. Competitors.** The proposer assures that the submitted proposal is not made in connection with any competing organization or competitor submitting a separate proposal in response to this RFP. No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the proposer to induce any other organization or competitor to submit, or not submit, a proposal for the purpose of restricting competition. The proposer further assures that the proposed costs have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement with any other organization or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition. Nor has the proposer knowingly disclosed the proposed costs on a prior basis, either directly or indirectly, to any other organization or competitor.
- 4. Validity of Proposal.** The proposer certifies that the proposal represents a valid and binding offer to provide services in accordance with the terms and provisions described in this RFP and any amendments or attachments hereto. The proposal shall remain valid for a period of 180 days after the submission due date and may be extended beyond that time by mutual agreement. At its sole discretion, the Agency may include the proposal, by reference or otherwise, into any contract with the successful proposer.
- 5. Press Releases.** The proposer agrees to obtain prior written consent and approval of the Agency for press releases that relate in any manner to this RFP or any resultant contract.

■ C. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

- 1. Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action.** The State is an Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate in its hiring, employment, or business practices. The State is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs, services, or activities.
- 2. Preparation Expenses.** Neither the State nor the Agency shall assume any liability for expenses incurred by a proposer in preparing, submitting, or clarifying any proposal submitted in response to this RFP.
- 3. Exclusion of Taxes.** The Agency is exempt from the payment of excise and sales taxes imposed by the federal government and the State. Proposers are liable for any other applicable taxes.
- 4. Proposed Costs.** No cost submissions that are contingent upon a State action will be accepted. All proposed costs must be fixed through the entire term of the contract.
- 5. Changes to Proposal.** No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submission. While changes are not permitted, the Agency may request and authorize proposers to submit written clarification of their proposals, in a manner or format prescribed by the Agency, and at the proposer's expense.
- 6. Supplemental Information.** Supplemental information will not be considered after the deadline submission of proposals, unless specifically requested by the Agency. The Agency may ask a proposer to give demonstrations, interviews, oral presentations or further explanations to clarify information contained in a proposal. Any such demonstration, interview, or oral presentation will be at a time selected and in a place provided by the Agency. At its sole discretion, the Agency may limit the number of proposers invited to make such a demonstration, interview, or oral presentation and may limit the number of attendees per proposer.
- 7. Presentation of Supporting Evidence.** If requested by the Agency, a proposer must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, data reporting capabilities, financial standing, or other information necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in this RFP. The Agency may make onsite visits to an operational facility or facilities of a proposer to evaluate further the proposer's capability to perform the duties required by this RFP. At its discretion, the Agency may also check or contact any reference provided by the proposer.
- 8. RFP Is Not An Offer.** Neither this RFP nor any subsequent discussions shall give rise to any commitment on the part of the State or the Agency or confer any rights on any proposer unless and until a contract is fully executed by the necessary parties. The contract document will represent the entire agreement between the proposer and the Agency and will supersede all prior negotiations, representations or agreements, alleged or made, between the parties. The State shall assume no liability for costs incurred by the proposer or for payment of services under the terms of the contract until the successful proposer is notified that the contract has been

accepted and approved by the Agency and, if required, by the OAG.

■ D. RIGHTS RESERVED TO THE STATE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, a proposer implicitly accepts that the following rights are reserved to the State:

- 1. Timing Sequence.** The timing and sequence of events associated with this RFP shall ultimately be determined by the Agency.
- 2. Amending or Canceling RFP.** The Agency reserves the right to amend or cancel this RFP on any date and at any time, if the Agency deems it to be necessary, appropriate, or otherwise in the best interests of the State.
- 3. No Acceptable Proposals.** In the event that no acceptable proposals are submitted in response to this RFP, the Agency may reopen the procurement process, if it is determined to be in the best interests of the State.
- 4. Award and Rejection of Proposals.** The Agency reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, for misrepresentation or if the proposal limits or modifies any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of this RFP. The Agency may waive minor technical defects, irregularities, or omissions, if in its judgment the best interests of the State will be served. The Agency reserves the right to reject the proposal of any proposer who submits a proposal after the submission date and time.
- 5. Sole Property of the State.** All proposals submitted in response to this RFP are to be the sole property of the State. Any product, whether acceptable or unacceptable, developed under a contract awarded as a result of this RFP shall be the sole property of the State, unless stated otherwise in this RFP or subsequent contract. The right to publish, distribute, or disseminate any and all information or reports, or part thereof, shall accrue to the State without recourse.
- 6. Contract Negotiation.** The Agency reserves the right to negotiate or contract for all or any portion of the services contained in this RFP. The Agency further reserves the right to contract with one or more proposer for such services. After reviewing the scored criteria, the Agency may seek Best and Final Offers (BFO) on cost from proposers. The Agency may set parameters on any BFOs received.
- 7. Clerical Errors in Award.** The Agency reserves the right to correct inaccurate awards resulting from its clerical errors. This may include, in extreme circumstances, revoking the awarding of a contract already made to a proposer and subsequently awarding the contract to another proposer. Such action on the part of the State shall not constitute a breach of contract on the part of the State since the contract with the initial proposer is deemed to be void *ab initio* and of no effect as if no contract ever existed between the State and the proposer.
- 8. Key Personnel.** When the Agency is the sole funder of a purchased service, the Agency reserves the right to approve any additions, deletions, or changes in key personnel, with the exception of key personnel who have terminated employment. The Agency also reserves the right to approve replacements for key personnel who have terminated employment. The Agency further reserves the right to require the removal and replacement of any of the proposer's key personnel who do not perform adequately, regardless of whether they were previously approved by the Agency.

■ E. STATUTORY AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

By submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, the proposer implicitly agrees to comply with all applicable State and federal laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1. Freedom of Information, C.G.S. § 1-210(b).** The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) generally requires the disclosure of documents in the possession of the State upon request of any citizen, unless the content of the document falls within certain categories of exemption, as defined by C.G.S. § 1-210(b). Proposers are generally advised not to include in their proposals any confidential information. If the proposer indicates that certain documentation, as required by this RFP, is submitted in confidence, the State will endeavor to keep said information confidential to the extent permitted by law. The State has no obligation to initiate, prosecute, or defend any legal proceeding or to seek a protective order or other similar relief to prevent disclosure of any information pursuant to a FOIA request. The proposer has the burden of establishing the availability of any FOIA exemption in any proceeding where it is an issue. While a proposer may claim an exemption to the State's FOIA, the final administrative authority to release or exempt any or all material so identified rests with the State. In no event shall the State or any of its employees have any liability for disclosure of documents or information in the possession of the State and which the State or its employees believe(s) to be required pursuant to the FOIA or other requirements of law.
- 2. Contract Compliance, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and Regulations of CT State Agencies § 46a-68j-21 thru 43, inclusive.** CT statute and regulations impose certain obligations on State agencies (as well as contractors and subcontractors doing business with the State) to ensure that State agencies do not enter into contracts with organizations or businesses that discriminate against protected class persons.
- 3. Consulting Agreements Representation, C.G.S. § 4a-81.** Pursuant to C.G.S. §§ 4a-81 the successful contracting party shall certify that it has not entered into any consulting agreements in connection with this Contract, except for the agreements listed below. "Consulting agreement" means any written or oral agreement to retain the services, for a fee, of a consultant for the purposes of (A) providing counsel to a contractor, vendor, consultant or other entity seeking to conduct, or conducting, business with the State, (B) contacting, whether in writing or orally, any executive, judicial, or administrative office of the State, including any department, institution, bureau, board, commission, authority, official or employee for the purpose of solicitation, dispute resolution, introduction, requests for information, or (C) any other similar activity related to such contracts. "Consulting agreement" does not include any agreements entered into with a consultant who is registered under the provisions of chapter 10 of the Connecticut General Statutes as of the date such contract is executed in accordance with the provisions of section 4a-81 of the Connecticut General Statutes. Such representation shall be sworn as true to the best knowledge and belief of the person signing the resulting contract and shall be subject to the penalties of false statement.
- 4. Campaign Contribution Restriction, C.G.S. § 9-612.** For all State contracts, defined in section 9-612 of the Connecticut General Statutes as having a value in a calendar year of \$50,000 or more, or a combination or series of such agreements or contracts having a value of \$100,000 or more, the authorized signatory to the resulting contract must represent that they have received the State Elections Enforcement Commission's notice advising state contractors of state campaign

contribution and solicitation prohibitions, and will inform its principals of the contents of the notice, as set forth in "Notice to Executive Branch State Contractors and Prospective State Contractors of Campaign Contribution and Solicitation Limitations." Such notice is available at https://seec.ct.gov/Portal/data/forms/ContrForms/seec_form_11_notice_only.pdf

5. Gifts, C.G.S. § 4-252. Pursuant to section 4-252 of the Connecticut General Statutes and Acting Governor Susan Bysiewicz's Executive Order No. 21-2, the Contractor, for itself and on behalf of all of its principals or key personnel who submitted a bid or proposal, represents:

(1) That no gifts were made by (A) the Contractor, (B) any principals and key personnel of the Contractor, who participate substantially in preparing bids, proposals or negotiating State contracts, or (C) any agent of the Contractor or principals and key personnel, who participates substantially in preparing bids, proposals or negotiating State contracts, to (i) any public official or State employee of the State agency or quasi- public agency soliciting bids or proposals for State contracts, who participates substantially in the preparation of bid solicitations or requests for proposals for State contracts or the negotiation or award of State contracts, or (ii) any public official or State employee of any other State agency, who has supervisory or appointing authority over such State agency or quasi-public agency;

(2) That no such principals and key personnel of the Contractor, or agent of the Contractor or of such principals and key personnel, knows of any action by the Contractor to circumvent such prohibition on gifts by providing for any other principals and key personnel, official, employee or agent of the Contractor to provide a gift to any such public official or State employee; and

(3) That the Contractor is submitting bids or proposals without fraud or collusion with any person.

Any bidder or proposer that does not agree to the representations required under this section shall be rejected and the State agency or quasi-public agency shall award the contract to the next highest ranked proposer or the next lowest responsible qualified bidder or seek new bids or proposals.

6. Iran Energy Investment Certification C.G.S. § 4-252(a). Pursuant to C.G.S. § 4-252(a), the successful contracting party shall certify the following: (a) that it has not made a direct investment of twenty million dollars or more in the energy sector of Iran on or after October 1, 2013, as described in Section 202 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act of 2010, and has not increased or renewed such investment on or after said date. (b) If the Contractor makes a good faith effort to determine whether it has made an investment described in subsection (a) of this section it shall not be subject to the penalties of false statement pursuant to section 4-252a of the Connecticut General Statutes. A "good faith effort" for purposes of this subsection includes a determination that the Contractor is not on the list of persons who engage in certain investment activities in Iran created by the Department of General Services of the State of California pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 2.7 of the California Public Contract Code. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to impair the ability of the State agency or quasi-public agency to pursue a breach of contract action for any violation of the provisions of the resulting contract.

7. Nondiscrimination Certification, C.G.S. § 4a-60 and 4a-60a. If a bidder is awarded an opportunity to negotiate a contract, the proposer must provide the State

agency with *written representation* in the resulting contract that certifies the bidder complies with the State's nondiscrimination agreements and warranties. This nondiscrimination certification is required for all State contracts – regardless of type, term, cost, or value. Municipalities and CT State agencies are exempt from this requirement. The authorized signatory of the contract shall demonstrate his or her understanding of this obligation by either (A) initialing the nondiscrimination affirmation provision in the body of the resulting contract, or (B) providing an affirmative response in the required online bid or response to a proposal question, if applicable, which asks if the contractor understands its obligations. If a bidder or vendor refuses to agree to this representation, such bidder or vendor shall be rejected and the State agency or quasi-public agency shall award the contract to the next highest ranked vendor or the next lowest responsible qualified bidder or seek new bids or proposals.

- 8. Access to Data for State Auditors.** The Contractor shall provide to OPM access to any data, as defined in C.G.S. § 4e-1, concerning the resulting contract that are in the possession or control of the Contractor upon demand and shall provide the data to OPM in a format prescribed by OPM [or the Client Agency] and the State Auditors of Public Accounts at no additional cost.
- 9. Other Provisions.** The Contractor shall comply with all applicable State of Connecticut and the Department policies including the CSDE Ethics Policy. The Contractor shall also comply with all federal and state statutes and regulations regarding the protection of all confidential data including, but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA")."

VI. APPENDIX

A. ABBREVIATIONS / ACRONYMS / DEFINITIONS

BFO	Best and Final Offer
C.G.S.	Connecticut General Statutes
CHRO	Commission on Human Rights and Opportunity (CT)
DAS	Department of Administrative Services (CT)
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act (CT)
IRS	Internal Revenue Service (US)
LOI	Letter of Intent
OAG	Office of the Attorney General
OPM	Office of Policy and Management (CT)
OSC	Office of the State Comptroller (CT)
PSA	Personal Service Agreement
P.A.	Public Act (CT)
RFP	Request For Proposal
SEEC	State Elections Enforcement Commission (CT)
U.S.	United States

- *contractor*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that enters into a POS contract with the Agency as a result of this RFP.
- *proposer*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that has submitted a proposal to the Agency in response to this RFP. This term may be used interchangeably with respondent throughout the RFP.
- *prospective proposer*: a private provider organization, CT State agency, or municipality that may submit a proposal to the Agency in response to this RFP, but has not yet done so
- *subcontractor*: an individual (other than an employee of the contractor) or business entity hired by a contractor to provide a specific service as part of a PSA with the Agency as a result of this RFP

B. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

Connecticut State Department of Education

The undersigned Respondent affirms and declares that:

1) General

- a. This proposal is executed and signed with full knowledge and acceptance of the RFP CONDITIONS stated in the RFP.
- b. The Respondent will deliver services to the Agency the cost proposed in the RFP and within the timeframes therein.
- c. The Respondent will seek prior approval from the Agency before making any changes to the location of services.
- d. Neither the Respondent or any official of the organization nor any subcontractor or the Respondent or any official of the subcontractor organization has received any notices of debarment or suspension from contracting with the State of CT or the Federal Government.
- e. Neither the Respondent or any official of the organization nor any subcontractor or the Respondent or any official of the subcontractor's organization has received any notices of debarment or suspension from contracting with other states within the United States.

Legal Name of Organization:

Authorized Signatory

Date

C. PROPOSAL CHECKLIST

To assist respondents in managing proposal planning and document collation processes, this document summarizes key dates and proposal requirements for this RFP. Please note that this document does not supersede what is stated in the RFP. Please refer to the Proposal Submission Overview, Required Proposal Submission Outline, and Mandatory Provisions (Sections II, III, and IV of this RFP) for more comprehensive detail. **This is a tool for proposers to use.** It is the responsibility of each respondent to ensure that all required documents, forms, and attachments, are submitted in a timely manner.

Key Dates

<u>Procurement Timetable</u>		
The Agency reserves the right to modify these dates at its sole discretion.		
Item	Action	Date
1	Letter of Intent Due	October 29, 2021
2	Deadline for Questions	November 1, 2021
3	Answers Released	November 5, 2021
4	Proposals Due	December 6, 2021
5	Proposer Selection	December 20, 2021
6	Start of Contract	July 1, 2022

Registration with State Contracting Portal (if not already registered):

- Register at: <https://portal.ct.gov/DAS/CTSource/Registration>
- Submit required forms:
 - Campaign Contribution Certification (OPM Ethics Form 1):
<https://portal.ct.gov/OPM/Fin-PSA/Forms/Ethics-Forms>

Proposal Content Checklist

- Cover Sheet** – Attachment A
- Table of Contents**
- Executive Summary** – 2 pages, maximum
- Main proposal (20 pages maximum) answering all questions with relevant attachments.** Proposers should use their discretion to determine whether certain required information is sufficiently captured in the body of their proposal or requires additional attachments for clarification.
- IRS Determination Letter** (for nonprofit proposers)
- Two years of most recent annual audited financial statements; OR any financial statements prepared by a Certified Public Accountant** for proposers whose organizations have been incorporated for less than two years.
- Proposed budget** – Attachment B
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement**
- Statement of Assurances**

Formatting Checklist

- Is the proposal formatted to fit 8 ½ x 11 (letter-sized) paper?
- Is the executive summary of the proposal within the 2-page limit?
- Is the main body of the proposal within the 20-page limit?
- Is the proposal in 11-point minimum and Arial, Tahoma or Verdana font?
- Does the proposal format follow normal (1 inch) margins and 1.5 line spacing?
- Does the proposer's name appear in the header of each page?
- Does the proposal include page numbers in the footer?
- Are confidential labels applied to sensitive information (if applicable)?

Attachment A – Cover Sheet

BID FOR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM
RFP #833

BIDDER'S LEGAL NAME		
BIDDER'S ADDRESS		
BIDDER'S FEIN		
CONTACT PERSON		
CONTACT'S TITLE		
PHONE(S)		
E-MAIL ADDRESS		

We have read the Request for Proposals and fully understand its intent and contents. We certify that we have adequate personnel, insurance, equipment, and facilities to fulfill the specified requirements. We understand that our ability to meet the criteria and provide the required goods or services shall be evaluated by a Selection Committee.

It is further understood and agreed that all information included in or attached to our proposal that is required by the Request for Proposals or otherwise shall be public record upon delivery to CSDE. In addition, we are aware that CSDE reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

I certify that the information contained in this proposal is accurate and presented in good faith to the best of my knowledge. I further certify that I am authorized to submit this proposal and will abide by the conditions set forth in the Request for Proposal.

Submitted by:

(Authorized Official's Signature)

(Date)

(Title)

(E-mail Address)

Attachment B – Budget

Bidder:		
Project Title:		
Total Project Cost:		
Codes	Descriptions	Budget Amount
100	Personal Services - Salaries	
200	Personal Services - Benefits	
300	Purchase Prof Tech Services	
500	Other Purchased Services	
600	Supplies and Materials	
890	Other Objects	
940	Indirect Costs/Administrative Services	
	Total	

Attachment C – Budget Narrative

Code	Object	Total
100	<p>PERSONAL SERVICES – SALARIES. Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary employees including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This includes gross salary for personal services rendered while on the payroll of the bidder. Specify titles and salary information (hourly rate, total to be charged to the project, etc.)</p>	
	<p>(Example: Transportation specialist @ \$50/hr x 100 hrs = \$5,000)</p>	
200	<p>PERSONAL SERVICES – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS. Amounts paid by the bidder on behalf of employees; these amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are in addition to that amount. Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, while not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are parts of the cost of personal services.</p>	
300	<p>PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES. Services which by their nature can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. Included are the services of consultants, auditors, programmers, etc.</p>	
	<p>(Example: Programmer to develop a database to track attendance of drivers @ \$10,000 fee)</p>	
500	<p>OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES. Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the bidder (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). Include expenses related to communications, travel (hotel, airfare, meals, etc.), insurance coverage, printing and binding - publication costs.</p>	
	<p>(Example: 10 round trip airfares to Hartford @ \$500=\$5000)</p>	
600	<p>SUPPLIES & MATERIALS. Amounts paid for consumable goods, office supplies, transportation supplies, software, etc.</p>	

890	OTHER OBJECTS. (Miscellaneous Expenditures) Expenditures for goods or services not properly classified in one of the above objects.	
940	INDIRECT/ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS. Costs incurred by the bidder, which are not directly related to the project but are a result thereof. Include management fees (with breakdown) and other indirect or administrative costs.	
	TOTAL	

Additional space, if needed, to provide detailed cost narrative that explains the basis and rationale for the costs proposed. Use the space below to include assumptions or calculation approaches used to develop the cost proposal.

RSCO Transportation Zone Map



Transportation Guidelines:



Transportation
Guidelines.pdf