



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

No. 2534-871

Title: Program Administration -  
Refugee School Impact Program

**DSHS Administration:**  
**ESA/CSD**

### Solicitation Schedule

Event	Date and Time
DSHS posts Competitive Solicitation.	April 30, 2025,
Pre-Bid Conference at 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time. Link	May 6, 2025, 4:00pm
Bidder questions are due by 5 p.m. Pacific Time.	May 14, 2025, 5pm
Proposals are due by 5 p.m. Pacific Time.	June 4, 2025, 5pm
Anticipated Contract Executed start date.	October 1, 2025
<b>Estimated Contract Performance Period</b>	October 1, 2025-September 30, 2026

**Responses must be submitted to** Amel A. Alsalman, Coordinator, Department of Social and Health Services; Facilities, Finance and Analytics Administration; Central Contracts and Legal Services  
Email: [amel.alsalman@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:amel.alsalman@dshs.wa.gov)

#### **Solicitation and Amendments will be posted on:**

DSHS Procurement Website: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ffa/procurements-and-contracting>

WEBS Website: <https://pr-webs-vendor.des.wa.gov/>

Applicable WEBS Commodity Codes: 952-43, 918-32 Consulting Services  
Code# 918-38 Education and Training Consulting

#### **Auxiliary Aids and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Services:**

DSHS will provide access to this Solicitation document to individuals with disabilities and Limited English Proficient individuals. Please contact the Coordinator to request auxiliary aids and services.

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## SECTION A CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

### 1. Purpose

This competitive Solicitation is issued to assist the Office of Refugee and Immigrant Assistance (ORIA), Economic Services Administration, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) in seeking qualified Contractor to serve as the statewide Program Administrator for the Refugee School Impact program, which provides federal funding for activities that lead to the effective integration and education of eligible children and youth.

### 1. Background

Washington state boasts a vibrant and sizable immigrant community and has consistently ranked in the top ten states in the U.S. for refugee resettlement.<sup>1</sup> Between 2022 and 2024 Washington welcomed over 67,000 refugees and other populations eligible for federal resettlement benefits. ORIA's goal is for refugee and immigrant families and individuals to succeed and thrive in Washington state. ORIA currently has 21 programs that provide a continuum of services to support eligible clients from the time they arrive in Washington state until naturalization (typically after five years in the U.S.). ORIA's network of over 100 contracted service providers specialize in offering services that are culturally specific and linguistically appropriate. This network includes community-based non-profit organizations, public agencies, for-profit organizations, ethnic community-based organizations and refugee resettlement agencies. Services include, but are not limited to, refugee foster care, refugee health and mental health services, employment services, youth mentoring, housing stabilization, English language instruction, social services and community orientation, and specialized services for refugee children and refugee elders.

In federal fiscal year 2024, Washington welcomed nearly 29,000 refugees and other federally qualified humanitarian immigrants. The top populations arriving to Washington were from Ukraine and Afghanistan, with sizeable populations arriving from Syria, Eritrea, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cuba, Haiti, and Venezuela. The counties that have welcomed the highest number of refugees in the past year include King, Snohomish, Pierce, Clark, Spokane, Whatcom, and Benton-Franklin. Approximately 12% of refugee arrivals are children ages 0-4 and approximately 34% are ages 5 through 18. Approximately 2,500 refugee children and 400 parents were served in the RSI program in federal fiscal year 2024.

Most refugee children experience a number of challenges that bar them from being able to take advantage of available educational opportunities. A high proportion of refugee students are limited-English proficient. Many have little or no formal educational background. Parents of refugee children may struggle to find appropriate educational opportunities for them, whether it be preschool or other early learning opportunities, or after-school enrichment activities. Most refugee children have experienced some level of trauma and stress from fleeing their home country. Most have experienced separation or loss of family members which leads to ongoing feelings of grief and compounds the

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<sup>1</sup> Refugee Processing Center: [Admissions & Arrivals — Refugee Processing Center](#)

trauma. In total, these emotional experiences often compromise their learning capacity in a new environment.

To address the challenges faced by refugee children and their families, the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) invests funding to states to design services and programs that meet the goals of the RSI program. The RSI program is divided into two components: the general Refugee School Impact (RSI) program for school-aged refugees (generally between the ages of 5 through 18) and the Early Refugee School Impact (ERSI) program for children before they enter Kindergarten (generally between the ages of birth through 5). These program components have the following focus areas and allowable activities:

**Refugee School Impact Program (RSI) for School-Aged Children (ages 5-18):**

- a. **Providing specialized approaches and support for eligible students**, such as English as a Second Language classes, tutoring, newcomer or transitional programs, after school and summer programs, mentoring, behavioral health supports, and programming that supports integration.
- b. **Supporting families learning to navigate the U.S. education system**, such as school-specific orientation for both families and students, navigators or cultural brokers, and language access.
- c. **Developing capacity for school staff and systems**, through activities and resources such as specialized trainings for school staff around the unique and varied needs of ORR-eligible populations, ensuring language access by translating critical documents, interpretation, and specialized staff dedicated to working with ORR-eligible school-aged children, youth, and families.

**Early Refugee School Impact Program (ERSI) for Young Children (ages Birth-5)**

- a. **Facilitating child care and preschool access** by supporting families with systems navigation, including the subsidy application process, and helping families enroll their children in day care, Head Start/Early Head Start, the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)/Early ECEAP, or other appropriate preschool.
- b. **Supporting the academic and social preparation of children for formal schooling (preschool or Kindergarten)**, through providing specialized services that support the cognitive, social, and emotional growth of preschool-aged children, administering developmental screening tools, such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition (ASQ-3), and working with districts to determine special education eligibility.
- c. **Supporting parent engagement**, through providing parenting classes or peer support groups that focus on topics such as: healthy early childhood development, developmental milestones, the rights of children with disabilities, school systems, and U.S. child welfare laws, and through home visiting services that enhance a parent's ability to support early childhood development.

## **2. Project Scope**

DSHS-ORIA is interested in receiving proposals from qualified organizations that can serve as the statewide RSI Program Administrator, overseeing programming for refugee children ages birth-18. The majority of the Contract funding will be passed through the RSI Program Administrator to subrecipients who will provide a diverse array of programming for refugee children and youth.

The Program Administrator will:

### **a. Develop a framework for the RSI program.**

The Program Administrator will develop a framework for the RSI Program that supports the integration, adjustment, and academic success of newly arrived refugee children and their families. Direct services must focus on the allowable areas determined by ORR.

### **b. Manage the Subawarding of Contract Funds.**

The Program Administrator will oversee and manage the subawarding process and contracts with school districts and CBOs. As part of the subawarding process the Program Administrator will complete the following tasks:

- i. Develop and launch multiple Notice of Funding Opportunities for School Districts for District Partnerships to award RSI funding and for CBOs to award RSI, Ukrainian RSI, and Early RSI funds.
- ii. Provide an information session and technical assistance to potential applicants.
- iii. Establish criteria for funding and ensure funding decisions are made in an equitable and fair way, that prioritizes direct services for refugee children and youth. Funding decisions shall be made in conjunction with DSHS-ORIA.
- iv. Execute Contracts with School Districts and CBOs. All awards to subrecipients shall be in a cost-reimbursement model. The Bidder shall ensure that each subrecipient meets the DSHS required insurance levels, which have different requirements for school districts and CBOs, prior to contract execution.
- v. Provide ongoing oversight and monitoring of all subrecipients. Provide training and technical assistance to the subrecipients, as needed, to ensure contract success.
- vi. Act as a thought partner and connector when there are challenges in the RSI program at the School District or in CBOs. Support subrecipients in brainstorming and resolving challenges in a timely manner.

To prevent interruption of the RSI program during the procurement process. DSHS-ORIA will approve partnerships and develop a tentative award plan for the FFY 2026 contract period (October 2025-September 2026).

**c. Provide Training and Technical Assistance.**

The provision of training and technical assistance is a key function of the RSI Program Administrator. Ongoing training and technical assistance opportunities support district and CBO partners in maintaining contractual compliance, developing best practices, and enhancing service delivery to best meet the needs of refugee children. Further, training opportunities for the general public and daycare/preschool/school staff, work to build capacity amongst service providers by promoting skills that allow for the creation of welcoming, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically responsive environments for refugee students and their families. At a minimum, the Program Administrator shall:

- a. Provide two annual convenings for partners in the RSI program, at least one of which must be in-person. The topics for the convenings shall be agreed upon in conjunction with DSHS-ORIA. The convenings serve as opportunities for partners to learn about contractual requirements, best practices, and strategies for providing specialized educational and integration support to refugee children. Expert speakers may be brought in to address emerging trends or needs within the refugee population.
- b. In addition to the two annual convenings, provide at least four virtual trainings for RSI partners and other service providers who may interact with refugee children (birth – 18).
- c. Provide ongoing opportunities for technical assistance to RSI partners around contractual compliance, immigration eligibility, monitoring and evaluation, and other topics, as needed.
- d. Develop and manage a public webpage that describes the RSI program, lists the partners, and provides a broad array of technical support, information and resources. Post relevant and helpful articles, curriculum, resource guides, or best practices highlights to support the RSI program.

**d. Provide Program Evaluation and Monitoring.**

The Program Administrator shall develop a Program Evaluation and Monitoring framework. This shall include developing and tracking specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound annual program outcomes for all RSI activities. Outcomes used for school districts may differ from those used for community-based organizations. Historically, pre- and post-scores from the WIDA (World-Class Instruction Design and Assessment), or other statewide standardized tests were collected from School Districts. Outcomes for CBOs working with school-aged children *must*, at a minimum, incorporate outcomes from the [RSI Outcome Measures Warehouse](#), which offers outcomes in the areas of academic support, school and social integration, and social emotional learning (SEL) measures.

The Program Administrator must provide contract oversight with school districts and community-based organizations, which includes programmatic and fiscal compliance. The Program Administrator will complete onsite monitoring at least once per organization during each fiscal year, unless an exception is provided by DSHS-ORIA.

The Program Administrator shall ensure that only eligible children access the RSI program. *The Program Administrator must collect from its subrecipients, or otherwise obtain, copies of immigration documents that verify proof of refugee status ([valid types of documentation may be seen here](#)).* Eligibility for the RSI program is determined by Congress and is communicated to states through policy letters by ORR. Currently, ORR-funded services, including the RSI program, are available to eligible individuals from the following groups:

- a. Refugees
- b. Asylees (who have been granted asylum)
- c. Cuban and Haitian entrants
- d. Iraqi and Afghan Special Immigrants
- e. Amerasians
- f. Certified victims of human trafficking
- g. Afghan Humanitarian Parolees (who meet ORR eligibility)
- h. Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (who meet ORR eligibility)

Program eligibility is subject to change based on federal policy changes. The Program Administrator will stay apprised of immigration eligibility changes and will support its subrecipients in maintaining compliance.

Bidder shall identify the key personnel it shall utilize in performing this Contract, and their experience and qualifications, as part of its Response. If awarded a Contract, Bidder shall not make changes to such Key Personnel during the term of the Contract except as requested or approved by DSHS.

### **3. Bidder Minimum Qualifications**

All Bidders must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- a. Licensed to do business in Washington state.
- b. The organization has at least (3) years of verifiable experience working with educational entities to include contract management, coordination of supplemental educational services and training.
- c. The organization has at least three (3) years of verifiable experience working with community-based organizations serving newly arrived refugee communities.
- d. Working knowledge of and experience supporting supplemental educational services for English Language Learners.

- e. Experience developing and maintaining a website.
- f. Knowledge of the Common Core State Standards Initiative, English language proficiency assessments such as the WIDA, and other standardized tests that measure student progress.
- g. Knowledge of the refugee resettlement process and other humanitarian pathways that bring newcomers to the state.
- h. Ability to comply with federal requirements to serve as a subrecipient.
- i. The Contractor has (3) years of verifiable experience in conducting contractual monitoring of federally-funded programs.

Bidders failing to demonstrate in their Bids that they meet these minimum qualifications will be considered nonresponsive and will therefore be disqualified from further consideration.

#### **4. Period of Contract Performance**

DSHS-ORIA intends to award one Contract(s) for the Services described in this Competitive Solicitation. The period of performance under the Contract shall be October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026. The term of the Contract may be extended by amendment up to four times for up to one year per amendment at the sole discretion of DSHS and upon federal funding availability. Additional services that are appropriate to the scope of this Solicitation, as determined by DSHS, may be added to the Contract in a mutually agreeable amendment.

#### **5. Funding**

DSHS-ORIA has budgeted an amount not to exceed \$7,000,000 for this Project. DSHS may reject any Response in excess of that amount. Funding that will be used to fund the federal fiscal year 2026 contract has been received by DSHS. Any Contract awarded is contingent upon the availability of funding.

DSHS is looking for competitive bids that invest the majority of available funding in district partnerships and community-based organizations for the purpose of direct service provision to students. For the upcoming federal fiscal year, DSHS estimates at least the following amounts be allocated:

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Estimated Funding Level</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Funding</b>
Subawards to School Districts	\$3,100,000	44%
Subawards to CBOs serving Ukrainian children (URSI)	\$1,000,000	14%
Subawards to CBOs serving any nationality of refugee children	\$1,000,000	14%
Subawards for Early Refugee School Impact	\$1,350,000	20%



(ERSI)		
Contractor Administrative Costs; Training and Technical Assistance Expenses; Other	\$550,000	8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$7,000,000</b>	<b>100%</b>

The contract between DSHS-ORIA and the Program Administrator will be a cost-reimbursement model.

## 6. Reporting Requirement

The Program Administrator will be responsible for reporting requirements related to the RSI program. Participant demographic and service information must be maintained in ORIA's case management database, CareSphere, unless the Program Administrator's pre-existing database is approved by DSHS-ORIA for use in the RSI program. The Contractor must collect, at a minimum, from its subrecipients the following demographic fields for use in federal reporting:

- a. Alien number
- b. First, middle, and last name
- c. Date of birth
- d. Immigration status
- e. Sex
- f. Nationality
- g. Zip code, city, and county of residence
- h. Immigration eligibility date
- i. Service enrollment date
- j. Service exit date

Immigration eligibility must be confirmed by the Program Administrator to ensure accurate reporting. In addition to demographic information, the Program Administrator shall report on:

- a. The total number of participants (students and parents) served, and services received, broken down by program type;
- b. Outcomes and evaluation performance measures;
- c. Activities, accomplishments, and new initiatives;

- d. Challenges and emerging issues;
- e. Monitoring activities including if corrective action was identified; and
- f. Client success stories.

The Program Administrator will comply with the following reporting schedule:

Type of Data Needed	Reporting Period	Deadline
Program Narrative, Participant Demographic Information	Federal Fiscal Year Quarters 1 and 2	May 5, 2026
Program Narrative, Participant Demographic Information	Federal Fiscal Year Quarters 3 and 4	November 5, 2026
Participant Demographic Information	Full Federal Fiscal Year	December 15, 2026
Subgrantee List and Funding Amount	Full Federal Fiscal Year	November 1, 2026
Contract activities performed by the Program Administrator	Monthly	Due 30 days after the month that is being reported on. For example, the report for October 2026 is due November 31, 2026.

## 7. Sub-recipient Status

The successful Program Administrator will serve as a subrecipient of federal awards as defined by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-133 to include:

- a. Maintain records that identify, in its accounts, all federal awards received and expended and the federal programs under which they were received, by the title and number, award number and year, name of federal agency, and name of the pass-through entity;
- b. Maintain internal controls that provide reasonable assurance that the Program Administrator is managing federal awards in compliance with laws, regulations, and provisions of contracts or grant agreements that could have a material effect on each of its federal programs;
- c. Prepare appropriate financial statements, including a schedule of expenditures of federal awards;
- d. Incorporate 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F audit requirements into all agreements

between the Program Administrator and its subcontractors who are subrecipients;

- e. Comply with all applicable requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, including any future amendments to 2 CFR Part 200, and any successor or replacement Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular or regulation; and
- f. Comply with the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe streets Act of 1968, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and The Department of Justice Non-Discrimination Regulations, 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subparts C.D.E. and G, and 28 C.F.R. Part 35 and 39. (Go to [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ocr/](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ocr/) for additional information and access to the aforementioned Federal laws and regulations.)

If the Program Administrator expends \$1,000,000 or more in federal awards from any and/or all sources in any fiscal year, the Program Administrator shall procure and pay for a single audit or a program-specific audit for that fiscal year. Upon completion of each audit, the Program Administrator shall:

- a. Submit to the DSHS contact person the data collection form and reporting package specified in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F, reports required by the program-specific audit guide (if applicable), and a copy of any management letters issued by the auditor;
- b. Follow-up and develop corrective action for all audit findings; in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F; prepare a "Summary Schedule of Prior Audit Findings" reporting the status of all audit findings included in the prior audit's schedule of findings and questioned costs.

If it is determined by DSHS, or during the course of a required audit, that the Program Administrator has been paid unallowable costs under this or any Program Agreement, DSHS may require the Program Administrator to reimburse DSHS in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.

## SECTION B DEFINITIONS

Additional definitions for Contract-specific terms are found in the Sample Contract set forth as Attachment A to this Solicitation and shall apply to those terms as they are used in this Solicitation. The following terms have the meanings set forth below:

Agency or DSHS – The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services.

Amendment – A unilateral change to the Solicitation that is issued by DSHS at its sole discretion and posted on WEBS.

Apparent Successful Bidder (ASB) – A Bidder submitting a Response to this Solicitation that is evaluated, identified, and announced by DSHS as providing the best value to the Agency. Upon execution of a Contract, the ASB is referred to as the successful bidder or the Contractor.

Authorized Representative – An individual designated by the Bidder to act on its behalf who has the authority to legally bind the Bidder concerning the terms and conditions outlined in this Solicitation and related documents.

Bid - An offer, proposal or quote for goods or services and all related materials prepared and submitted by a Bidder in response to this Solicitation. The terms Bid, Quotation, Response and Proposal are all intended to mean the same thing.

Bidder – An individual, organization, public or private Agency or other entity submitting a bid, quotation, response or proposal in response to this Solicitation.

Contract – A written agreement entered into between a successful Bidder and DSHS as a result of this Solicitation.

Complaint – A process that may be followed by a Bidder prior to the deadline for bid submission to alert DSHS of certain types of asserted deficiencies in the Solicitation.

Community-Based Organization or CBO – CBOs are subrecipients of the RSI program, and are eligible to apply for general RSI funding, Ukrainian RSI (URSI) funding, and Early RSI funding.

Coordinator or Solicitation Coordinator – An individual or designee who is employed by DSHS within the DSHS Central Contracts and Legal Services Office and who is responsible for conducting this Solicitation.

Debriefing – A short meeting a Bidder may request with the Coordinator following the announcement of the Apparent Successful Bidder for the purpose of receiving information regarding the review and evaluation of that Bidder's Response.

Direct Services – Services provided directly to refugee children, or their parents. Examples of direct services include, but are not limited to: tutoring, after-school programming, literacy club, coding classes, mentoring, college preparation, conflict resolution groups, play and learn groups, and administering developmental questionnaires.

District Partnership – A District Partnership is the partnership between a School District and a community-based organization that are working together to serve refugee students and families in the RSI program. School Districts are required to partner with a CBO in the RSI Program.

Early Refugee School Impact (ERSI or Early RSI): Funding appropriated from ORR to provide RSI services to young refugee children (ages birth-5) and their parents.

Key Personnel – Staff being proposed to do the work under this Proposal.

ORR – Office of Refugee Resettlement - The federal office that administers the refugee program. It is within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

Inclusion plan - a detailed plan showing a Bidder's actions toward meeting Washington Small and Diverse Business goals on a specific competitive procurement.

Procurement - The broad process of identifying goods and services for purchase or acquisition, of effecting the purchase or acquisition, and of managing the purchase or acquisition. This Solicitation is a part of an overall Procurement process. Despite the broader meaning attributed to "procurement", for purposes of this Solicitation, the terms Solicitation, RFP/RFQ/RFQQ and Procurement are interchangeable.

Project - The undertaking or work for which contracted Services are being requested pursuant to this Solicitation.

Protest – A process that may be followed by a Bidder after the announcement of the apparent Successful Bidder to alert DSHS to certain types of alleged errors in the evaluation of the Solicitation.

RCW – The Revised Code of Washington. All references to RCW chapters or sections shall include any successor, amended, or replacement statute.

Refugee – Any person who is outside their country of nationality or habitual residence, and is unable or unwilling to seek protection of that country due to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. For the purposes of this RFP, the term "refugee" also refers to other eligible populations as defined by ORR:

- a. Refugees;
- b. Asylees;
- c. Certified Victims of Human Trafficking;
- d. Amerasians;
- e. Cuban-Haitian Entrants;
- f. Special Immigrant Visa Holders from Iraq and Afghanistan;

- g. Afghan Humanitarian Parolees (who meet ORR eligibility); and
- h. Ukrainian Humanitarian Parolees (who meet ORR eligibility).

Refugee School Impact (RSI): Funding appropriated by ORR to provide activities that lead to effective integration and education of eligible children and their families.

Responsible Bidder – An individual, organization, public or private Agency, or other entity that has demonstrated the capability to meet all the requirements of the Solicitation and to meet the elements of responsibility. (See [RCW 39.26.160 \(2\)](#))

Responsive Bidder – An individual, organization, public or private Agency, or other entity who has submitted a Bid that fully conforms in all material respects to the Solicitation and all its requirements, in both form and substance.

RFP/RFQ/RFQQ – The request for proposals, qualifications, quotations, or qualifications and quotations set forth in this Solicitation document.

Services – Labor, work, analysis, or similar activities provided by a contractor to accomplish a specific scope of work.

Small Business – An in-state business, including a sole proprietorship, corporation, partnership, or other legal entity, that certifies under penalty of perjury that they are Washington Small Business as defined in [RCW 39.26.010\(22\)](#).

Solicitation or Competitive Solicitation – A formal process providing an equal and open opportunity for bidders culminating in a selection based upon predetermined criteria. A Competitive Solicitation requests the submission of bids, quotations, or proposals for the consideration of DSHS in contracting to meet its needs. This RFP/RFQ/RFQQ is a Solicitation.

Solicitation Document – This RFP/RFQ/RFQQ document, including all attachments and all amendments that are issued by the Coordinator.

Statement of Work – The detailed description of services to be performed by the Contractor and outlined in the Contract.

Subcontractor – An individual or other entity contracted by Bidder to perform part of the services or to provide goods under the Contract resulting from this Solicitation. Subcontractors, if allowed, are subject to the advance approval of DSHS.

Ukrainian Refugee School Impact (Ukrainian RSI or URSI) – Funding appropriated by ORR to provide RSI services to specific Ukrainian populations. Allowable activities are the same as the general RSI program.

Veteran-owned business – A business that is certified by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) in the state of Washington. (See [RCW 43.60A.200](#))

WEBS – Washington's Electronic Business Solution, the Bidder notification system found at <https://pr-webs-vendor.des.wa.gov/> and maintained by the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services.

<p align="center"><b>SECTION C</b> <b>EXPLANATION OF SOLICITATION PROCESS</b></p>
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## 1. Solicitation Schedule

The Solicitation Schedule set forth below outlines the tentative schedule for important events relating to this Solicitation. Except as modified in an Amendment issued by the Coordinator, the dates and times listed through the Response Submission date are mandatory deadlines. The remaining dates are estimates and may change without the posting of an Amendment. Failure to meet the Response deadline will result in Bidder's disqualification.

Item	Action	Date
1.	DSHS posts Competitive Solicitation.	4/30/25
2.	Prospective Bidders should register as a Vendor on WEBS using one of the commodities codes on the cover page of this Solicitation as soon as possible to receive notifications.	As soon as possible
3.	Bidders must RSVP for the Pre-Bid Conference by 5 p.m. Pacific Time. By sending a confirmation email to <a href="mailto:amel.alsalman@dshs.wa.gov">amel.alsalman@dshs.wa.gov</a> . A Microsoft Teams link will be provided upon receipt of the confirmation.	5/5/25
4.	Pre-Bid Conference at 4:00 p.m. Pacific Time.	5/6/25
5.	Bidders may submit written questions or requests for change in Solicitation Requirements until 5 p.m. Pacific Time.	5/14/25
6.	DSHS posts responses to written questions.	5/21/25
7.	Bidders may submit written Complaints by 5 p.m. Pacific Time.	5/27/25
8.	Bidders must submit a Response by 5 p.m. Pacific Time.	6/4/25
9.	DSHS evaluates Written Responses.	6/5/25-6/19/25
10.	Oral presentations, if requested by DSHS.	6/24/25-6/27/25
11.	DSHS announces the Apparent Successful Bidder(s) on WEBS and begins contract negotiations.	7/11/25
12.	DSHS notifies unsuccessful Bidder(s).	7/11/25
13.	Bidders may request a Debriefing conference until 5 p.m. Pacific Time.	7/16/25
14.	DSHS holds Debriefing conferences, if requested.	7/21/25
15.	Deadline for submission of Protests by Bidders who participated in a debriefing conference.	Five business days after the date of the Debriefing

Item	Action	Date
16.	DSHS considers Protests, if any, and issues determination.	10 days after receipt of the Protest.
17.	Contract Execution/Start Date.	10/1/25

## 2. Posting of Solicitation Documents

DSHS shall post this Solicitation, and all amendments and announcements relating to this Solicitation, on WEBS. WEBS can be accessed at: <https://pr-webs-vendor.des.wa.gov/>. In order to inform the largest number of potential bidders about this opportunity, DSHS shall also post documents relating to this Solicitation on the Procurements page of the DSHS website, found at:

<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/ffa/procurements-and-contracting>

All Bidders must register as a vendor on WEBS, using an appropriate commodities code listed on the front page of this Solicitation, and download this Solicitation from WEBS. This should be done as soon as possible in order for Bidder to receive notifications automatically generated on WEBS, but no later than the date set forth in Section C.1., Solicitation Schedule for Announcement of the Apparent Successful Bidder(s).

## 8. Amendment, Cancellation/Rejection of Bids, Reissuance of Solicitation

DSHS may amend or add to, retract from or cancel this Solicitation at any time, in whole or in part, and without penalty. DSHS may reject all bids and cancel or reissue this Solicitation. All amendments and notifications of cancellation shall be posted on WEBS. In the event of a conflict between amendments or between an amendment and this Solicitation Document, the document issued latest shall control.

## 9. Communications regarding Solicitation

Upon the posting of this Solicitation, all communications concerning this Solicitation must be directed to the Coordinator listed on the cover page of this Solicitation document. With the exception of the Response, which shall be submitted as provided in Section D, Instructions Regarding Content, Format and Submission of Written Responses, communications with the Coordinator should be sent via email. DSHS may disqualify any Bidder who communicates with anyone in DSHS other than the Coordinator regarding this Solicitation.

DSHS considers all oral communications unofficial and non-binding on DSHS. Bidders should rely only on written statements issued by the Coordinator. Email shall be considered an official method of communication unless otherwise specified in this document.

## 10. Pre-Bid Conference

Bidders are invited to attend a Pre-Bid Conference, which shall be held virtually at the date



and time set forth below. The Pre-Bid Conference is an opportunity for Bidders to learn more about the conditions under which a Contract will be performed and to discuss the inclusion plan, especially when subcontracting opportunity may be a part of the Contract. At the Pre-Bid Conference, Bidders will have an opportunity to ask questions and to hear presentations from knowledgeable DSHS personnel. DSHS shall summarize the information shared at the Pre-Bid Conference and post that summary on the DSHS procurement web page and on WEBS as an Amendment to this Solicitation. Bidders may only rely upon information that is included in this Amendment in preparing their Responses.

Bidders must RSVP for the Pre-Bid Conference by May 5, 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time by sending a confirmation email to [amel.alsalman@dshs.wa.gov](mailto:amel.alsalman@dshs.wa.gov) . A Microsoft Teams link will be provided upon receipt of the confirmation.

### **3. Questions and Answers**

Bidders may send written questions concerning this Solicitation to the Coordinator by the date and time set forth on the Solicitation Schedule in Section C.1. for submission of Questions. Questions should be sent via email and should include the number and title of this Solicitation in the subject line.

DSHS may consolidate Bidder questions and shall respond by posting one or more Amendments on WEBS and on the DSHS Procurement website on or around the date specified in the Solicitation Schedule. Only Bidders who have properly registered and downloaded the original Solicitation directly via the WEBS system: <https://pr-webs-vendor.des.wa.gov/> will receive notification of Amendments and other correspondence pertaining to this Solicitation.

### **11. Request for Change in Solicitation Requirements**

If Bidder believes that this Solicitation contains requirements which would unreasonably prohibit or restrict Bidder's participation, or believes that different requirements would provide better value to the State, Bidder shall submit a written explanation of the issue together with proposed alternative requirements to the Coordinator no later than the deadline for Bidder Questions as stated in the Solicitation Schedule outlined in Section C.1. The Coordinator shall not be required to consider requests for changes after this date. If any changes are made to the Solicitation requirements, an Amendment setting forth those changes will be posted on WEBS.

### **12. Complaints**

In the event a Bidder believes that this Solicitation either: (a) unnecessarily restricts competition; (b) contains an unfair or flawed evaluation or scoring process; or (c) contains inadequate or insufficient information to permit preparation of a Response, the Bidder shall submit a written complaint to the Coordinator. The Coordinator will forward the complaint to the DSHS Chief of Central Contracts and Legal Services for review. The complaint shall include a proposed remedy and shall be submitted no later than five (5) business days prior to the date when Responses are due. DSHS shall post its Response to the Complaint on WEBS and on the DSHS procurement web page.

Should a Bidder's complaint identify a change that would be in the best interest of DSHS to make, DSHS may issue an Amendment modifying this Solicitation. The DSHS decision regarding a complaint is final and no further administrative appeal is available. If no complaint is filed, a Bidder cannot later file a protest based on any of the above complaint criteria.

### **13. Minority & Women's Business Enterprises (MWBE) and Veteran-Owned Business Enterprises**

In accordance with the legislative findings and policies set forth in RCW 39.19, 43.60A.200, 39.26.240 and 39.26.245, the State of Washington encourages participation by Veteran-owned, Minority-Owned, and Women-Owned businesses either self-identified or certified by, respectively, the Department of Veterans Affairs or the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE). While the State does not give gender or race-based preferential treatment, it does seek equitable representation from Washington Small Businesses as well as the veteran, minority, and women-owned business communities.

According to Chapter 39.26.010 RCW, to qualify as a Washington Small Business, Bidder must meet three (3) requirements:

- a. Location: Bidder's principal office/place of business must be located in and identified as being in the State of Washington. A principal office or principal place of business is a firm's headquarters where business decisions are made and the location for the firm's books and records as well as the firm's senior management personnel.
- b. Size: Bidder must be owned and operated independently from all other businesses and have either: (a) fifty (50) or fewer employees or (b) gross revenue or less than seven million dollars (\$7,000,000) annually as reported on Bidder's federal income tax return or its return filed with the Washington State Department of Revenue over the previous three consecutive years.
- c. WEBS Certification: Bidder must have certified its Washington Small Business status in Washington's Electronic Business Solution ([WEBS](#)).

According to Chapter 43.60A.190 RCW, to qualify as a Certified Washington Veteran-Owned Business, Bidder must meet four (4) requirements:

- a. 51% Ownership. Bidder must be at least fifty-one percent (51%) owned and controlled by:
  - (1) A veteran is defined as every person who at the time he or she seeks certification has received a discharge with an honorable characterization or received a discharge for medical reasons with an honorable record, where applicable, and who has served in at least one of the capacities listed in RCW 41.04.007;
  - (2) A person who is in receipt of disability compensation or pension from the

Department of Veteran's Affairs; or

- (3) An active or reserve member in any branch of the armed forces of the United States, including the national guard, coast guard, and armed forces reserves.
- b. Washington Incorporation/Location. Bidder must be either an entity that is incorporated in the State of Washington as a Washington domestic corporation or, if not incorporated, an entity whose principal place of business is located within the State of Washington.
- c. WEBS Certification. Bidder must have certified its Veteran-Owned Business status in Washington's Electronic Business Solution ([WEBS](#)).
- d. WDVA Certification. Bidder must have certification documentation to the Washington Department of Veteran's Affairs (WDVA) and be certified by WSVA and listed as such on WDVA's website ([WDVA](#) – Veteran-Owned Businesses).

DSHS encourages Washington Small, Veteran-owned, and MWBE Bidder participation both directly in Response to this Solicitation and as subcontractors to a Prime Bidder.

Bidders may contact the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) at <http://omwbe.wa.gov/> and/or the Department of Veterans Affairs at <http://www.dva.wa.gov/program/veteran-owned-business-certification> in order to obtain information on certified firms for potential subcontracting arrangements or for information on how to become certified. Nothing in this section is intended to prevent or discourage participation from non-MWBE firms or non-Veteran-owned businesses.

#### **14. Auxiliary Aids and Limited English Proficient (LEP) Services:**

DSHS will provide access to this Solicitation document to individuals with disabilities and Limited English Proficient individuals. Please contact the Coordinator to request auxiliary aids and services.

If an individual believes that the Department has discriminated against them based on a protected status, please contact the DSHS Investigations Unit for the Nondiscrimination Policy Brochure and complaint process. The brochure can be found at <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Non-discrim%2022-171.pdf>

#### **15. Cost to Prepare Response**

DSHS will not be liable for any costs incurred by the Bidder in preparing, conducting a site assessment, or submitting a Response to this Solicitation.

#### **16. Acceptance of Solicitation Terms**

In submitting a Response, Bidder must include a signed Bid Submission Letter in the form set forth on Attachment B, as well as signed Bidder Certifications in the form set forth on

Attachment C. Bidder must acknowledge that in submitting a Response, it accepts all terms of this Solicitation Document, including all of its Attachments, and that Bidder's Response constitutes a binding offer. Bidders may not alter or redline the solicitation terms or requirements in their Response. Submitting altered or redlined solicitation terms or requirements in the Bidder Response may result in bidder disqualification.

## **17. Joint Proposals**

If Bidders submit a joint Response with one or more other persons or entities, these persons or entities must designate a prime Bidder. The prime Bidder will be DSHS's sole point of contact through the Procurement process. If selected as the Apparent Successful Bidder, the prime Bidder shall sign the Contract and any amendments and will be liable and responsible to DSHS for all performance under the Contract.

## **18. Withdrawal of Responses**

After a Response has been submitted, Bidders may withdraw their Response at any time up to the Response due date and time as specified in Section C.1, Solicitation Schedule. A written request to withdraw the Response must be submitted to the Coordinator. After withdrawing a Response, the Bidder may submit another Response at any time up to the Response submission date and time.

## **19. Ownership of Responses**

All materials submitted in response to this Solicitation become the property of DSHS, unless received after the deadline in which case the Response shall be returned to the sender. DSHS shall have the right to use any of the ideas presented as part of the process in any manner as it deems appropriate or beneficial, regardless of whether it is contained in a Response that results in selection for a Contract.

## **20. DSHS Award Options; Improvement of Bid Offers**

After Responses are received and written evaluations are completed, DSHS may (but shall not be required to) request best and final offers from one or more Responsible and Responsive Bidders. The written Responses of Bidders invited to provide a best and final offer may be re-evaluated and the point values may be adjusted based upon changes to pricing or proposed services, deliverables or methodologies that are included in a best and final offer, prior to DSHS' determination of the Apparent Successful Bidder.

Alternatively, after reviewing all Responses, DSHS may enter into negotiations with the highest ranked Responsive and Responsible Bidder in order to determine if the Bid may be improved before identification of the Apparent Successful Bidder.

DSHS shall not be required to request best and final offers or to enter into negotiations and reserves the right to make a Contract award without further discussion of the Response. Therefore, the Response should be submitted on the most favorable terms that Bidder intends to offer.

## **21. Oral Interviews or Presentations**

After bids are received and written evaluations are completed, DSHS may request that one or more Responsible and Responsive bidders participate in an oral interview and/or presentation or demonstration. If this option is elected, additional points shall be awarded as set forth in Section E.3, Evaluation Criteria and Scoring of Responses.

## **22. Announcement of Successful Bidder(s)**

DSHS shall announce the Apparent Successful Bidder(s) on WEBS on the date indicated in Section C.1., Solicitation Schedule. All announcements of Apparent Successful Bidders are subject to the negotiation of a Contract satisfactory to DSHS.

Bidders may request a debriefing conference with the Coordinator to discuss information regarding the review and/or evaluation of their bid and may, under certain circumstances, file a formal protest requesting that DSHS provide an identified remedy if Bidder believes certain types of errors occurred. A more detailed description of these processes is set forth in Section F, Debriefing and Protest Procedure.

## **23. Ethics, Policies and Law**

This Solicitation, the evaluation of Responses, and any resulting contract will be made in conformance with applicable Washington State laws and Policies.

Specific restrictions apply to contracting with current or former state employees pursuant to RCW 42.52. Bidders should familiarize themselves with the requirements prior to submitting a Response. Bidders must include, in their Letter of Submittal, information regarding any current or former state employees who are employed by, or subcontracted with, Bidder.

**SECTION D**  
**INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING CONTENT, FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF**  
**WRITTEN RESPONSES**

Bidders shall submit their Responses utilizing the forms set forth on Attachments B, C, D, E and F to this Competitive Solicitation. Each Attachment represents a separate section of the Response. Failure to complete and submit all required Attachments, and to sign them, if applicable, may result in Bidder disqualification. Responses should be typed in 12-point font and should be submitted in the following order with each section of the Response clearly labeled.

**1. Attachment B: Bid Submission Letter (Required, not scored)**

All Bidders must submit a completed bid submission letter in the form and with the minimum contents set forth on Attachment B, which must include all of the required acknowledgments and information. The Bid Submission Letter must be signed by an individual authorized to bind the Bidder contractually. Bidder's completed and signed Attachments B, C, E, and F, together with any documents that are required to be attached, and Bidder's answers to administrative questions set forth on Attachment D, Bidder Response Form, comprise the Administrative component of the Response.

**24. Attachment C: Bidder Certifications and Assurances (Required, not scored)**

All Bidders must submit the Bidder certifications and assurances form set forth on Attachment C, signed by an individual authorized to bind the Bidder contractually. Bidders may not alter or redline the Bidder Certifications and Assurances form in their Response. Submitting altered or redlined solicitation terms or requirements in the Bidder Response may result in Bidder disqualification.

**25. Attachment D: Bidder Response Form (Required, Portions Scored)**

Using Attachment D, Bidders must provide answers to the questions set forth on the Bidder Response Form to demonstrate satisfaction of administrative requirements and, as applicable to this Solicitation, their qualifications, approach and proposed pricing to provide the services as outlined in this Competitive Solicitation, including the Sample Contract set forth on Attachment A. The number of points allocated to each answer is indicated next to the question.

The Bidder Response Form is posted separately from this Solicitation document in Microsoft Word format. Except for limits that are noted on the Bidder Response Form, Bidders may utilize as much space as is reasonably required to respond to each question, provided all questions are repeated and remain numbered and ordered as set forth in Attachment D. If additional pages are needed, they should be attached to the page containing the initial portion of the Response to a question and should be marked clearly to indicate that they provide a continuation of Bidder's answer to a specific numbered question. Bidders should not submit product brochures, white papers, customer testimonials, cut sheets, or other pre-prepared materials in Response to any of the questions unless specifically requested.

Bidders must submit complete, well-organized explanatory answers that address all of the specific questions asked in the Bidder Response Form. Bidders should not assume that evaluators will be familiar with their businesses before conducting the evaluation.

Use of Attachment D assures that Bidder responds to specific questions in space immediately below those questions and helps to avoid confusion among evaluators about the question that is being responded to. In awarding points, evaluators shall not be obligated to search through the Bidder's answers to questions other than the one being reviewed in order to locate text that is responsive to the question being reviewed. Failure to use the form set forth on Attachment D (with the applicable questions set forth immediately above Bidder's answers), failure to respond to all questions and/or failure to submit any documents requested in the Bidder Response Form may result in Bidder disqualification.

If Bidder is awarded a Contract, DSHS may require that Bidder's Response to the Bidder Response Form be incorporated, in whole or in part, into the Contract.

## **2. Attachment E: Contractor Inclusion Plan (Required, not scored)**

All Bidders must submit the Contractor Inclusion Plan form set forth on Attachment E, signed by an individual authorized to bind the Bidder contractually. DSHS requires that Bidder submit this inclusion plan template as part of their proposal. Once submitted, the Inclusion Plan template becomes part of the Contract if awarded to the Bidder.

The Bidder shall also include an anticipated list of Washington Small, Minority, Women, and Veteran-owned subcontractors or vendors who may provide services on the project. Responses should reflect the Bidder's sincere efforts to include diverse, Washington Small, and Veteran businesses. Businesses listed in the plan must be certified by OMWBE or DVA, or registered in WEBS as Washington Small businesses. If a company is not certified or registered but may be eligible for certification, the Bidder should encourage the company to become certified.

Inclusion goals are aspirational. No preference is given for inclusion plans or goals in the evaluation of bids. While no minimum level of OMWBE certified, Veteran-owned, or Washington Small Business participation will be required as a condition for receiving an award, the plan must include the actions the Contractor will take to increase subcontracting opportunities for those business types.

## **Attachment F: Budget Form (Required, Scored)**

The Bidder must use Attachment F to identify all costs and expenses to be charged for performing the services necessary to accomplish the objectives of this contract. The Bidder may include other sources of funding for the program, but it is not required. The Bidder may make minor adjustments to the description of costs on the form. Justification of costs must be included on the Response form. Failure to use Attachment F and respond to questions related to the costs on Attachment D, 7. Bidder Quotation may result in Bidder disqualification.

## **26. Proprietary Information/Public Disclosure**

Materials submitted in response to this Solicitation shall be deemed public records as defined by RCW 42.56. All Responses and accompanying documentation shall become the property of DSHS upon receipt and will not be returned.

The Bidder's Response must include, in Attachment D, a statement identifying the pages of its Response, if any, which contain information the Bidder considers proprietary (for the purposes of public disclosure). Each page claimed to be proprietary must be clearly marked by stating the word "Proprietary" on the lower right-hand corner. Bidders must be reasonable in designating information as proprietary or confidential. **Bidders may not mark their entire Response proprietary. Doing so will not be honored and will disqualify your Response from further consideration.**

If DSHS receives a request to view or copy a Bidder's Response, DSHS will respond according to applicable law and DSHS's policy governing public disclosure. DSHS will not disclose any information marked "Proprietary" in a Response without giving the Bidder ten (10) days' notice to seek relief in superior court per RCW 42.56.540.

DSHS is required to publicly post the awarded Bidder(s)'s bid(s) and bid evaluation documents, upon completion of the Solicitation. DSHS shall redact these materials for information identified as proprietary and post them on the DSHS website subsequent to the award of a contract.

**Bidders may not include any DSHS client information in their Responses. Doing so will result in disqualification of the Response from further consideration.** If you wish to include examples of any forms or processes, use a blank form or ensure that all client information is completely redacted.

## **27. Submission of Responses**

Bid Responses must be stored in an acceptable electronic format and, if applicable, hard copy format, as set forth in Section 7, below. Bid Responses must be emailed directly to the Coordinator at the email address provided on the cover sheet of this Solicitation Document. Bid Responses must be received by the Coordinator in their entirety on or before the due date and time set forth in Section C.1., Solicitation Schedule, unless a posted Amendment to this Competitive Solicitation changes this due date and time. Bidder's completed version of each of the Attachments B, C, D, E, and F, to this Competitive Solicitation shall be included as a separate attachment to the Bidder's email(s).

Bidders assume all risks for the timely submission of the Response. Bidders are responsible for allowing sufficient time to ensure timely electronic receipt of their Response by the Coordinator and, in Solicitation that also requires that hard copies of the Response be submitted, to ensure timely receipt via other delivery methods. DSHS does not assume responsibility for problems with the Bidder's email, network or problems with the mail, parking, traffic or the services of any third-party courier. However, if DSHS email is not working properly, appropriate allowances will be made.

DSHS will not accept late Responses, nor grant time extensions for individual Bidders. DSHS will disqualify any Response and withdraw it from consideration if it is received after the Response submission due date and time.



## **28. Acceptable Electronic Formats for Submission of Responses**

Attachment D, Bidder Response Form, should be submitted in Microsoft Word format. Other Response documents must be formatted in Portable Document Format (Adobe Acrobat PDF) or Microsoft Word, Excel, or PowerPoint. Spreadsheet documents must be submitted in Microsoft Excel and in a live, unprotected file that includes all formulas, macros, and computations that are relied on or used to calculate any rates or values presented therein. When scanning documents to be submitted in PDF format, scanner resolution should be set to at least 200 dots per inch.

**NOTE: DSHS cannot receive emails that are larger than 30MB. To keep file sizes to a minimum, Bidders are cautioned not to use unnecessary graphics in their Responses. If your Response approaches or exceeds 30MB, you must break it up and send it by more than one email so that no single email exceeds 30MB.**

## **29. Alternative Submission Methods**

Bidders wishing to request an alternative method for submitting their Response must contact the Coordinator at least ten (10) days before the Response Submission Date. No alternative submission method will be accepted unless agreed to by the Coordinator in writing prior to the Response deadline.

## **SECTION E EVALUATION OF RESPONSES**

### **1. Bid Responsiveness; Administrative Review**

All Responses will be reviewed by the Coordinator to determine compliance with administrative and minimum qualification requirements and instructions specified in this Solicitation. DSHS may reject a Response as nonresponsive at any time for any of the following reasons:

- Incomplete Response
- Submission of a Response that proposes services that deviate from the scope and technical requirements set forth in this document and Attachment A, Sample Contract, except as permitted in an Amendment to this Solicitation
- Failure to meet the minimum Bidder qualifications or to comply with any requirement set forth in this Solicitation Document, including Attachments
- Submission of incorrect, misleading, or false information
- History of prior unsatisfactory contractual performance

The Coordinator may contact any Bidder for clarification of the Response. If a Response is deemed non-responsive, it shall be removed from further consideration. DSHS shall notify non-responsive Bidder(s) of this determination and the supporting reasons. Bidders whose Responses are found to be non-responsive shall be disqualified from further evaluation and shall be notified in writing.

If a Response meets all administrative and Bidder qualification requirements and submittal instructions, DSHS shall continue with the Written Evaluation and, if applicable, the Oral Evaluation.

### **30. Errors in Bidder Response**

Bidders are responsible for all errors or omissions contained in their Responses. Bidders will not be allowed to alter Response documents after the deadline for Response submissions.

DSHS reserves the right to contact any Bidder for clarification of Response contents. In those cases where it is unclear to what extent a requirement has been addressed, the evaluation panel may, in their discretion and acting through the Coordinator, contact a Bidder to clarify specific matters in the submitted Response.

DSHS reserves the right to waive minor administrative irregularities contained in any Bidder Response.

### 31. Evaluation Criteria and Scoring of Responses

Following the administrative review, Responses shall be evaluated and points shall be awarded for the management, technical and cost proposal components of the Response, as applicable, based upon Bidder's responses to the questions set forth on Attachment D, Bidder Response Form. Additional evaluation points may be awarded for specific criteria not included on Attachment D, Bidder Response Form only if set forth in this Section.

The maximum number of points available for each Bidder is **1000**. The maximum number of points that may be assigned with respect to specific questions is set forth on Attachment D, Bidder Response form. The overall breakdown for assignment of points in evaluating Responses to this Solicitation is as follows:

Management (Qualifications) Response.....	(21%) 210 points.
Technical Response.....	(23%) 230 points.
Training and Technical Assistance Response.....	(10%) 100 points.
Monitoring and Evaluation Response.....	(25%) 250 points.
Bidder's Proposed Pricing .....	(10%) 100 points.
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Total 1	
-----	
(*Optional) Oral Interview/Presentation.....	(5%) 50 points.
(*Optional) References demonstrating superior reliability and quality .....	(5%) 50 points.
Total 2	
-----	
EO 18-03 Response.....	(1%) 10 points.
Total 3	
-----	
<b>Total Possible Points .....</b>	<b>10000 points.</b>

### 32. Written Bid Evaluation Process

DSHS shall designate an evaluation team of at least three (3) evaluators to review, evaluate, and score the written question responses. These evaluators will be selected based on their qualifications, experience, capability and background. If oral interviews or presentations are conducted, additional evaluators may supplement or replace some or all of the individuals performing the written evaluation.

Evaluators shall assign scores up to the maximum points available. Individual evaluator points will be totaled and the average points for each Bidder will be calculated. The Bidder's average points earned for each question will be added together to determine the Bidder's total written evaluation points.

### 33. Evaluation Points to Washington Small and Veteran-owned Businesses

In accordance with [DES Policy 090-060](#) Supplier Diversity, DSHS shall consider awarding evaluation points to Certified Washington Veteran-owned and/or Washington Small Businesses.

DSHS will evaluate bids for best value and provide a bid preference point in the amount set forth on Attachment D, Bidder Response Form, to any Bidder who certifies that they are a Washington Small Business (as defined in [\(RCW 39.26.010\(22\)\)](#) or Certified Washington Veteran-owned Business (according to [\(RCW 43.60A.190\)](#)).

#### **34. Evaluation for Executive Order 18-03 (Firms without Mandatory Individual Arbitration for Employees)**

Pursuant to RCW 39.26.160(3) (best value criteria) and consistent with [Executive Order 18-03 – Supporting Workers’ Rights to Effectively Address Workplace Violations](#) (dated June 12, 2018), DSHS will evaluate bids for best value and provide a bid preference in the amount set forth on Attachment D, Bidder Response Form, to any bidder who certifies that their firm does NOT require its employees, as a condition of employment, to sign or agree to mandatory individual arbitration clauses or class or collective action waivers.

Successful bidders who certify that their employees are NOT required to sign these clauses and waivers as a condition of employment will have an EO 18-03 section added to their Contract incorporating this Response and requiring notification to DSHS if they later require their employees to agree to these clauses or waivers during the term of the Contract.

#### **35. Bidder’s References**

Once the written evaluations are completed, DSHS may contact the references provided by the top-ranked Bidder(s) in order to investigate past performance and validate information in Bidder Responses. In submitting a Response, Bidder agrees that it shall hold harmless DSHS and any individuals identified as references from and against liability resulting from the provision of information or the receipt and use of that information in evaluating Bidder’s Response.

While additional points may be awarded for superior performance and reliability as demonstrated through references (see Section E.3. above), references are generally evaluated on a pass/fail basis. DSHS may reject a bid and consider a bidder as non-responsible if a reference provides negative information about a Bidder’s past performance.

DSHS may, at any time, require additional or substitute references to determine the Bidder’s experience and level of responsibility. If the reference check process reveals information that should properly be considered in evaluating Bidder’s responses, DSHS may, in its sole discretion, reconvene the evaluation panel to reconsider the evaluation scoring in light of the information obtained.

#### **36. Oral Interview/Evaluation**

In addition to evaluating the written Response, DSHS may invite one or more of the highest scoring Bidders to make an oral presentation which shall be separately evaluated.

### **37. Selection of Apparent Successful Bidder**

The eligible Bidder that receives the highest total number of possible points will be presented to DSHS management for consideration as a finalist for the Apparent Successful Bidder. In the event multiple Contracts will be awarded, the applicable number of top-scoring eligible Bidders will be considered.

The selection process shall determine which Bidder provides the best value in meeting the needs of DSHS. Selection of the Apparent Successful Bidder(s) depends upon DSHS' assessment of multiple factors, including Bidders' qualifications, capabilities, efficiency, experience, reliability, responsibility, integrity, quality of proposed services and deliverables, timeliness, cost and potential impact on DSHS' needs. DSHS may consider whether the Response encourages diverse contractor participation; whether the Bid provides competitive pricing, economies and efficiencies; whether the Bidder considers human health and environmental impacts; whether the Response appropriately weighs cost and non-cost considerations; and life cycle cost, as applicable. DSHS may also consider a Bidder's performance on prior State or other contracts and may reject Responses of any Bidder who has failed to perform satisfactorily under any previous contract with the state or another party. DSHS reserves the right to select a Bidder whose Response is deemed to offer the best overall value and that is in the best interests of DSHS and the State of Washington.

DSHS management shall make the final determination as to which Bidder(s), initially designated as finalist(s), shall be officially selected and announced on WEBS as the Apparent Successful Bidder(s) on or about the date and time set forth in Section C.1., Solicitation Schedule. DSHS may also notify the Apparent Successful Bidder(s) and the unsuccessful Bidder(s) of its determination via email on or about the date and time specified in Section C.1., Solicitation Schedule.

DSHS' decision will be subject to the execution of a Contract satisfactory to DSHS within a reasonable period of time following the announcement of the Apparent Successful Bidder on WEBS. In the event the parties are unable to reach agreement on the final details of a Contract, consistent with Attachment A, Sample Contract, DSHS shall have the option of negotiating with the next highest ranked Bidder and of revising the announcement of the Apparent Successful Bidder.

**SECTION F  
BIDDER DEBRIEFING  
AND PROTEST PROCEDURE**

**1. Debriefing Conferences**

No later than 5:00 p.m. on the third business day following the posted announcement of Successful Bidder(s) on WEBS, Bidders may send an email to the Coordinator requesting a Debriefing Conference. Unless a different date is agreed upon by the Coordinator, the Debriefing Conference will be held on a date designated in Section C.1., Solicitation Schedule. Discussion at the debriefing conference will be limited to the following:

- If the Bidder's proposal was rejected, the reason for its rejection
- Evaluation and scoring of the Bidder's Response
- Critique of the Response based on the evaluation
- Review of Bidder's final score in comparison with the other final scores

No comparisons between Bids will be allowed during the Debriefing Conference, which shall be conducted by telephone, unless the Coordinator agrees to an in-person meeting, and shall last for a maximum period of thirty (30) minutes.

**38. Grounds and Filing of Protests**

A Bidder who has participated in a Debriefing Conference may file a formal Protest if the Bidder asserts that there are facts that indicate error in the evaluation of Bids on one or more of the following grounds:

- Bias, discrimination or conflict of interest on the part of the evaluator or in the process
- Mathematical errors in computing the score
- Non-compliance with procedures described in the Solicitation document or in DES policy

Protests must be emailed to the Solicitation Coordinator and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. (Pacific Time) on the fifth (5th) business day following the day of the Bidder's Debriefing Conference. The Protest must adhere to the requirements set forth in this Section or it will not be considered. This Protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to Bidders from DSHS under this Solicitation.

Protests must include the protestor's mailing address and phone number and the name of the individual responsible for filing the Protest. The Protest must state the Solicitation number and title, the grounds for the Protest, specific facts to support these grounds, and a description of the relief or corrective action being requested.

Protests not based on one of the grounds set forth in this Section will be rejected. It is not grounds for a protest to question an evaluator's professional judgment on the quality of a Response or DSHS' assessment of its own needs or requirements.

**39. DSHS Protest Review Process**

The Coordinator will immediately forward any Protest to the Chief of Central Contracts and Legal Services to assign to a Protest Coordinator for review. The Protest Coordinator, an individual who was not involved in the Solicitation, will consider the record and all available facts and will endeavor to issue a decision within ten (10) business days following receipt of the Protest. If additional time is required, the protesting party will be notified of the delay.

In the event a Protest may involve the conduct of or information submitted by another Bidder that also submitted a Response, such Bidder will be given an opportunity to submit its views and any relevant information on the issue(s) raised by the protest to the Solicitation Coordinator.

#### **40. Determination of Protests**

The Protest Coordinator shall issue a written determination regarding the Protest. This written determination shall include one or more of the following determinations:

- Upholding DSHS determination of the Apparent Successful Bidder(s) on the basis that there are insufficient facts to establish the alleged error; or
- Upholding DSHS' determination of the Apparent Successful Bidder(s) on the basis that there are only technical or harmless errors in DSHS' evaluation process; or
- Finding errors and identifying actions which may be taken by DSHS, such as:
  - i. Correction of errors and reevaluation of all bids,
  - ii. Cancellation and reissuance of the Solicitation (in which case all the Bidders will be notified), or
  - iii. Other corrective actions as may be appropriate

There is no further administrative process or remedy available within DSHS to appeal the determination that resulted in a Protest. If the protesting party does not accept DSHS' determination, the protesting party can seek relief from Superior Court in Thurston County, WA.

## **SECTION G**

### **CONTRACTING PROCEDURES**

#### **1. Contract Execution**

The Apparent Successful Bidder(s) is expected to sign a contract with DSHS that is substantially the same as Attachment A, Sample Contract, included with this Solicitation, and to enter into any subsequent Contract amendments that may be required to address specific work or services.

DSHS reserves the right to require that some or all of Bidder's Response be incorporated into the Contract, and to negotiate the specific wording of the Statement of Work, based on the requirements of this Solicitation and the terms of the Response submitted by the Apparent Successful Bidder. If changes are requested as part of the Bid Response, DSHS may consider, but shall be under no obligation to agree to, modifications to the General Terms and Conditions of Attachment A, Sample Contract.

If the Apparent Successful Bidder fails or refuses to sign a Contract within ten (10) business days of delivery by DSHS, DSHS may elect to designate the next highest-ranked finalist as the Apparent Successful Bidder.

#### **41. Security Design Review**

The Apparent Successful Bidder (ASB) will be required to pass a DSHS Security Design review prior to signing the awarded Contract. The ASB will need to demonstrate how their system meets all of the security requirements. If the system does not pass the Security Design review, the Contract will not be issued. Any security requirements that are agreed to may be written in to the Contract.

#### **42. Digital Accessibility**

Pursuant to the WaTech Digital Accessibility Standard [USER-01-01-S](#), if this solicitation includes the acquisition, procurement, development, modification, or enhancement of public-facing digital content or tools; including websites, applications, and media (Covered Technology), the following requirements apply.

All Covered Technology procured under this Solicitation must meet Level AA compliance with [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.2](#).

The Apparent Successful Bidder under this Solicitation will be required to validate compliance with this requirement through either a third-party accessibility validation report, a Vendor Product Accessibility Template (VPAT), or compliance review documentation.

Should the Covered Technology procured under this Solicitation fail to meet the required compliance Level, the Apparent Successful Bidder will be required to submit a remediation plan for addressing all issues identified.

#### **43. Insurance**



The Apparent Successful Bidder shall provide evidence of its compliance with the insurance requirements included on Attachment A, Sample Contract.

#### **44. Non-Endorsement**

The award of a Contract is not an endorsement by the State or DSHS of the Bidder or Bidder's Services and shall not be represented as such by Bidder in any advertising or other publicity materials.

By submitting a Response to this Solicitation, the Bidder agrees to make no reference to DSHS in any literature, promotional materials, brochures, sales presentations or the like without the prior written consent of DSHS.

#### **45. Background Checks**

Individuals who will be performing the Contract on behalf of the Apparent Successful Bidder may be required to undergo background checks. Individuals who have disqualifying results (showing crimes and/or negative actions) may not be permitted to provide Services under the Contract.

#### **46. Electronic Payment**

The State prefers to utilize electronic payment in its transactions. The successful Bidder will be required to register in the Statewide Vendor Payment system, <https://ofm.wa.gov/it-systems/statewide-vendorpayee-services>, prior to submitting a request for payment under their Contract. No payment shall be made until the registration is completed.

#### **47. Subcontractor / Prompt Payment & Retainage**

The Apparent Successful Bidder (ASB) is required to pay each subcontractor for satisfactorily completed work performed under this prime Contract within thirty (30) days from the receipt of each payment the ASB receives from the Agency. ASB further agrees to return any retainage payments to each subcontractor within thirty (30) days after the subcontractor's work is satisfactorily completed and any liens have been secured. Any delay or postponement of payment within this time period may occur only for a good cause following written approval of the Agency. In addition, the Agency will not pay the ASB for subcontractor work unless the ASB can show that a prompt payment method for subcontractors is established.

If the Contract that results from this Solicitation includes the use of a subcontractor(s), the above clause will be added to the Contract requiring prompt payment and retainage for subcontractor(s).

#### **48. Subcontractor Participation Monitoring and Reporting**

If the Contract that results from this Solicitation includes the use of an Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) Certified subcontractor, the Apparent Successful Bidder (ASB) and their subcontractors are obligated to complete vendor registration in OMWBE's Access Equity system (B2Gnow). Access Equity is an online vendor management system used by Washington State to track subcontractor payments.

**Confidential information (Tax ID, etc.) is not required for vendor registration, and SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED as this information is available to all B2Gnow customers.** Prime Contractors that have previously registered with B2Gnow for any public entity, must verify the system has updated information. Contractors can access the system at <https://omwbe.diversitycompliance.com/> or through a direct link on the Office of Minority and Women's Business Enterprises (OMWBE) website at: <https://omwbe.wa.gov/>.

Each month during the contract, the Prime Contractor will report payments to all OMWBE Subcontractors through the Access Equity system. This monthly reporting information includes total payment in dollars made to the Subcontractor, payment dates, and any additional information required to verify payment to Subcontractors. The Prime Contractor will enter this payment information into the Access Equity system, and the Subcontractors will verify this payment information in the system. Online training is available through the Access Equity/B2Gnow system. This requirement applies to both Prime Contractors and Subcontractors.