



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:**

**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS INSURANCE BROKER AND CONSULTING SERVICES**

**Issue Date: April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017**  
**Due Date: April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017, 5 p.m.**

*To be considered, proposals must be signed and returned via email to [oleon@wested.org](mailto:oleon@wested.org) by the due date and time.*

*Hard copies may be mailed to the WestEd Procurement Department at 4665 Lampson Ave., Los Alamitos, CA 90720 by the due date and time.*

**Proposal responses will be considered valid for a period of 120 calendar days after the proposal due date.**



## PROPOSAL FOR WESTED HEALTH & WELFARE BENEFITS BROKER

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## I. INTRODUCTION

WestEd is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to provide brokerage and consulting services in support of the Agency's health and welfare benefits program. Responses should specifically address the scope of work described in Section VI.

This request for proposals (RFP) contains background information on WestEd and specific information that must be included in the proposals submitted. An electronic version and/or hard copy of the proposal must be received no later than 5 p.m. on April 21, 2017.

Electronic copies must be delivered via email to [oleon@wested.org](mailto:oleon@wested.org). If necessary, physical copies may be delivered directly to our office at the following address:

WestEd  
4665 Lampson Ave.  
Los Alamitos, CA 90720  
Attn: Oscar Leon, Procurement Manager

## II. BACKGROUND

WestEd is a not-for-profit research, development, and service agency that works with education and other communities to promote excellence, achieve equity, and improve learning for children, youth, and adults. WestEd has over 650 employees, located in 15 offices across the United States, and had revenue in excess of \$160 million for Fiscal Year 2016.

WestEd is a Joint Powers Agency ("JPA") formed under the California Joint Exercise of Powers Act, California Government Code section 6500 et seq. and governed by public entities in Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah. WestEd's Board of Directors is comprised of members representing agencies from these states, as well as other national education and business leaders. WestEd's income is tax exempt under Section 115 (1) of the Internal Revenue Code.

WestEd complies with the required federal regulations on procurement, as well as applicable State procurement law and procedures.

Efforts, including affirmative steps prescribed by federal regulation (if applicable), will be made by WestEd to utilize small and minority-owned businesses, women's business enterprises and labor surplus area firms when possible. The selected firm may be required to undertake affirmative steps to utilize such firms in subcontracts if this contract is federally funded. A firm qualifies as a small business firm if it meets the

definition of “small business” as established by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.201, Subsector 541612) by having average annual receipts for the last three fiscal years not exceeding \$15 million.

### **III. WESTED CONTACT**

All communications, including any requests for clarification, concerning this RFP should be addressed in writing to the following:

Oscar Leon  
Procurement Manager  
[oleon@wested.org](mailto:oleon@wested.org)

#### IV. SOLICITATION FORM

**FAILURE TO SIGN THIS PAGE WILL DISQUALIFY YOUR RESPONSE**

The undersigned offers and agrees to furnish the audit services listed in this document at the prices and terms stated, subject to all of the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposal. The undersigned warrants and represents their authority to bind the firm into an agreement subject to the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposal.

Company Name:

Street Address:

City, State Zip:

Email:

Telephone:

By (Authorized Signature)	Date Signed:
Print name and title of Authorized Signatory	

**ALL SPECIFICATIONS, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL WILL BE INCORPORATED INTO ANY RESULTING AGREEMENT.**

## V. SOLICITATION KEY DATES AND TIMELINE

<b>RFP Activity</b>	<b>Dates</b>
RFP Released	April 3, 2017
Questions Due by bidders	April 10, 2017
Response to questions posted	April 14, 2017
Proposal Due Date	April 21, 2017
Interviews	Anticipated: May 1, 2017 – May 19, 2017
Award Notice	May 26, 2017
Commence work	June 1, 2017
Other Key Dates	WestEd's Fiscal Year: December 1 – November 30 WestEd's Insurance Plans: Calendar Year

## VI. SCOPE OF WORK

WestEd will receive proposals for qualified insurance brokers to provide benefits brokerage and consulting services. The successful bidder may be retained for an initial two (2) year term with a potential three (3) year option term that may follow as a result of this procurement process and would be responsible for:

- Analysis, recommendation, marketing, negotiation and placement of insurance
- Compliance, communications and administrative support
- Review vendor contracts, evidence of insurance
- Act as liaison and advocate for the Agency in resolving vendor issues
- Support Open Enrollment activities

WestEd is not subject to ERISA. Current benefit offerings and census information is provided below and should only be used as needed for the preparation of your proposal:

Coverage Type	Funding	Carrier	Employee Enrollment
Medical	Fully Insured	Kaiser HMO	179
	Self Insured	Aetna Select EPO	326
	Self Insured	Aetna Choice POS	82
Dental	Self Insured	Aetna Dental PPO	609
Vision	Self Insured	VSP	593
Basic Life/ADD, STD, LTD	Fully Insured	Standard	653
Voluntary Life	Fully Insured	Standard	227
EAP, Travel Assistance	Fully Insured	Standard	653
FSA	Employee Pre-Tax Health Care FSA	Aetna/PayFlex	251
	Employee Pre-Tax Dependent Care FSA	Aetna/PayFlex	75

Commuter Benefits	Employee Pre-Tax	CommuterCheck Direct	172
Supplemental Cancer, Hospital, Accident Protection	Employee Pre-Tax	Aflac	35

## VII. PROPOSAL OUTLINE

To simplify the review process and to obtain the maximum degree of comparability, the proposals should include the following items and be organized in the manner specified below.

### 1. Letter of Transmittal

A letter of transmittal briefly outlining the firm’s understanding of the work and general information regarding the firm and individuals to be involved is limited to a maximum of two pages. The letter should clearly identify the local address of the office of the firm performing the work, the telephone number, and the name of the authorized representative. The letter shall include a clear statement from Proposer that this offer is binding and shall remain open for 120 days from the due date of this RFP and acknowledges that its proposal cannot be withdrawn within that time without the written consent of WestEd.

### 2. Table of Contents

Include a table of contents that identifies the material by section, page number, and a reference to the information to be contained in the proposal.

### 3. Solicitation Form

The Solicitation Form included in the RFP shall be included here.

### 4. Profile of Firm Proposing

- a. State whether the firm is a local, national, or international firm and include a brief description of the size of the firm including whether it is privately held or publicly traded.
- b. State whether the proposer is a qualified small or minority-owned business, women’s business enterprise or labor surplus area firm.
- c. State whether the firm is in compliance with the registration and permit requirements to do business in California.



- d. Provide information on your organization and how long you have been in business
- e. Include whether your firm is engaged in other lines of business
- f. Provide an annual report or other documentation exhibiting the financial health of your firm, including profit and loss, assets and liabilities and other relevant information
- g. Disclose any conditions that may impact your ability to fulfill contractual obligations (e.g. bankruptcy, pending litigation, planned office closures, impending mergers)
- h. Disclose whether there are any disciplinary actions on file with the state insurance commissioner against your firm
- i. Describe the local office and a brief description of the team that would be assigned to WestEd and include:
  - i. An organizational chart relevant to the team being proposed, identify who WestEd's first point of contact would be, who would provide back-up coverage and what the escalation process is;
  - ii. How many clients or volume of customer support the team is normally responsible for
  - iii. Describe the firm's policy on notification of changes in key personnel

## **5. Qualifications**

- a. What is your approach when shopping for bids or negotiating renewals, and how would you differentiate WestEd to insurers? How would WestEd benefit from your market position?
- b. Briefly describe the firm's system of quality control to ensure the work meets a high quality standard
- c. Briefly describe how familiar you are with products and carriers for all lines of coverage including health, stop loss/reinsurance, wellness, dental, vision, life, disability, long-term care and voluntary benefits and how you determine which carrier's products to review for renewal purposes
- d. Describe whether you have experience with clients that are similar to WestEd's industry and employer type (e.g. education, non-ERISA, joint powers agency)
- e. Include five client references, including three current clients and two clients that you either lost or terminated services with you in the past three years

## **6. Scope of Services and Proposed Project Schedule**

Briefly describe the firm's understanding of the scope of services to be provided, including but not limited to:

- a) What your role is in the management of the benefit plans including evaluating health related risks, offering suggestions on how to reduce the company's claims experience and premiums, and assisting with escalated claims resolution/issues?
- b) Include whether your firm employs an in-house actuary for providing detailed analysis of claims data, stop loss risk, workforce demographic analysis, funding options, trends, premium ratios, reserves, IBNR reporting and actuarial value of plan design changes. If yes, please provide credentials
- c) Does your firm assist with recommendations for setting employee contributions? Do you provide benefit rate sheets with COBRA rate equivalents and imputed income calculations? If so, please provide a sample
- d) Describe how your firm stays current with state regulations that impact multi-state employers and what resources you provide to your clients to stay compliant
- e) Include whether your firm employs an in-house benefits/compliance attorney. If so, please provide his/her credentials and examples of communications provided to clients. If not, do you use an external benefits/compliance attorney and if so, which firm do you use?
- f) What resources do you provide to help manage benefits and outline a benefits strategy? Please provide a sample of the materials and reports that you use as a part of your regular reviews
- g) What tools do you use to stay on top of any ongoing or outstanding action items?
- h) What benchmarking surveys do you use/provide to determine whether WestEd's benefits/renewal proposals are competitive with similar organizations?
- i) Describe the technology tools you use and any you make available to your clients and if there are plans in place to enhance your current technology/tools
- j) What role does your firm play in facilitating Open Enrollment? Please provide examples of any communications
- k) Does your firm provide any value added benefits (e.g. wellness program, benefits enrollment systems, health care advocacy)? If so, are there additional fees for these services?
- l) Identify which Account Managers from Aetna and Kaiser would most likely be assigned to work with WestEd through your firm
- m) Please provide a sample client service agreement and the list of carriers to which you would bid WestEd's services

## **7. Fees and Compensation**

Provide the following information disclosing all fees to be assessed to WestEd for Scope of Work:

- a. Quote an annual total flat fee for completing all requirements outlined in the Scope of Work for an initial two (2) year term and for the potential three (3) year term that may follow
- b. Describe what your proposed policy would be on receiving commissions or other sources of income you may receive in connection with services provided to WestEd and how it would be disclosed
- c. Describe whether you provide a Performance Guarantee and if so, provide a sample copy
- d. The frequency and timing of the firm's billing process
- e. Cost of additional related services not included in the Scope of Services that you anticipate might be used by WestEd.

## **8. Exceptions to Contract Requirements**

Any exceptions to the requirements of the sample contract shall be noted in the proposal. WestEd shall have no obligation to accept any exceptions and may reject any proposal noting exceptions to its contract requirements.

## VIII. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCESS

By use of numerical and narrative scoring techniques, proposals will be evaluated by WestEd against the factors specified below. The relative weights of the criteria—based on a 100-point scale—are shown below.

Criteria	Points
1. Qualifications, experience, references, and ability to carry out the described work	25 points
2. Plan design analysis, consultation, marketing and renewals	25 points
3. Compliance, communications and administrative support	20 points
4. Fees / expenses	20 points
5. Other factors, including completeness of proposal, adherence to RFP instructions, other relevant factors not considered elsewhere	10 points

## IX. REVIEW PROCESS

WestEd may, at its discretion, request interviews/presentations by or a meeting with any or all firms, to clarify or negotiate modifications to the firm’s proposal. However, WestEd reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals submitted. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both technical and price standpoints, that the firm can propose. WestEd contemplates award of the contract to the responsive, responsible firm whose proposal is the most advantageous to WestEd, based on the highest total points and its decision is final.

As a federal contractor, it is WestEd’s policy to utilize, whenever possible, small businesses, disadvantaged small businesses, veteran-owned small businesses, minority-owned firms, and/or woman-owned businesses. Therefore, firms that meet these criteria will be given preference, should they meet all other stated criteria in the RFP.

## **X. NOTICE TO FIRM(S)**

All materials provided to WestEd become the property of WestEd and may be returned only at its sole discretion. WestEd is a public entity. All proposals and any materials submitted with a proposal may be deemed public records subject to disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act. No portion of any proposal or materials submitted therewith will be withheld from disclosure as proprietary, trade secret or confidential unless that portion is clearly marked by the firm as such, and the firm agrees to indemnify WestEd against any claim or action to compel disclosure of such portion of the proposal. WestEd is not obligated to accept any proposal or to negotiate with any entity. All transactions are subject to the final approval of WestEd, which reserves the right to reject any and all proposals without liability. All costs directly or indirectly related to a response to this RFP will be borne by the firm.

The contract, if any, shall be awarded to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to WestEd, based on the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP. WestEd may at its sole discretion select the response that best fits its needs, may choose to cancel the RFP, or to not select any Firm. A selection committee will evaluate the responses based on established criteria, including compliance with the direction herein, experience and qualifications, cost, financial position of the company, and other factors as stated in this RFP. If selected, the successful firm will enter into a written agreement with WestEd that will include service agreements and compensation agreements.

All information in this RFP should, for purposes of this RFP, be considered proprietary and confidential. Information contained in this RFP should not be shared or distributed without the expressed written consent of WestEd.

## **XI. REJECTION OF PROPOSAL(S)**

WestEd reserves the right in its sole discretion to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, without incurring any cost or liability whatsoever. All proposals will be reviewed for completeness of the submission requirements. The proposal may be rejected if it fails to meet a material requirement of the RFP or if it is incomplete or contains irregularities. A deviation is material to the extent that a proposal is not in substantial accord with RFP requirements.

Immaterial deviations may cause a bid to be rejected. WestEd may or may not waive an immaterial deviation or defect in a proposal. WestEd's waiver of an immaterial deviation or defect will in no way modify the RFP or excuse a firm from full compliance with the RFP requirements.

Any proposal may be rejected where it is determined to be not competitive, or where the cost is not reasonable.

Proposals that contain false or misleading statements may be rejected if in WestEd's opinion the information was intended to mislead WestEd regarding a requirement of the RFP.

WestEd may reject a proposal from a firm it finds non-responsive. Any person or entity that has substantially assisted WestEd in preparing any part of this RFP is prohibited from submitting a proposal. Submission of a proposal to WestEd shall constitute the firm's certification that the proposal is not collusive.

## **XII. COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS**

Any Firm must affirmatively agree and certify that it will comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including but not limited to the provisions of the Fair Employment and Housing Act (Govt. Code, § 12900 et seq.) and any applicable regulations promulgated there under (Cal. Code of Regs., tit. 2, § 72850.0 et seq.). Any Firm must affirmatively agree to include the non-discrimination and compliance provisions of this clause in any and all subcontracts to perform work under the agreement.

## **XIII. WRITTEN QUESTIONS AND ADDENDA**

Written questions or comments regarding this RFP must be in writing and received no later than April 10, 2017. Questions should be emailed to the Procurement Manager at [oleon@wested.org](mailto:oleon@wested.org). All questions will be responded to via email. Firm(s) invited to submit a proposal understand and agree that they have an affirmative duty to inquire and seek clarification regarding anything in this RFP that is unclear or open to more than one interpretation.

WestEd, at its sole discretion, may make questions submitted by Firms and responses to the submitted questions available to all Firms.

WestEd reserves the right in its sole discretion to revise or amend this RFP prior to the stated submittal deadline. Any such revisions will be made by written addenda to this RFP. Firms are responsible for verifying they have received, and all proposals shall acknowledge receipt of, all addenda issued by WestEd relating to this RFP. Failure to acknowledge receipt of all such addenda may render a proposal non-responsive.

## XIV. SUBMISSION

Electronic copies of responses must be received by April 21, 2017 at 5 p.m. Any response received after this date may be returned or not considered. Responses should be submitted electronically to the Procurement Manager at [oleon@wested.org](mailto:oleon@wested.org). If Firms wish to also submit a hard copy of the proposal, it needs to be received no later than the due date and mailed to 4665 Lampson Ave., Los Alamitos, CA 90720; Attn: Oscar Leon. Submission of a proposal shall constitute the firm's representation that it:

- Has thoroughly examined and become familiar with the scope of work set forth in this RFP;
- Understands the requirements of the scope of work, the nature of the work and all other matters that may affect the work;
- Will honor its proposal for no less than 120 days after the submission date stated in this RFP (or until execution of a final contract with the selected firm, if sooner), and acknowledges that its proposal cannot be withdrawn within that time without the written consent of WestEd;
- Will comply with all requirements set forth in this RFP, and in the ensuing contract, if any.

## XV. PROTESTS

Following the selection of the apparent successful firm, WestEd shall notify all firms that submitted a RFP in a timely manner of its intent to award a contract to such firm. Any protest to the award of the contract to the apparent successful firm shall be submitted to WestEd in writing within no less than five (5) calendar days from the date of such notice. Any protest shall state with specificity the ground on which the protestor alleges the contract may not be awarded to the apparent successful firm. WestEd shall consider any properly submitted protest and may accept or reject such protest as it determines appropriate in its sole discretion.