



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

RFP NO. 2026HCA15

NOTE: *If you download this RFP from any source other than the Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS), you are responsible for registering in WEBS for your organization to receive any RFP amendments, including Bidder questions/agency answers. HCA is not responsible for any failure of your organization to register in WEBS or any other repercussions that may result to your organization because of this failure.*

PROJECT TITLE: Peer Pathways Workforce Development Conference

PROPOSAL DUE DATE: October 28, 2026, by 12:00PM Pacific Time, Olympia, Washington, USA.

Only emailed Proposals will be accepted.

ESTIMATED TIME PERIOD FOR CONTRACT: November 23, 2026, to September 30, 2032

The Health Care Authority anticipates the need for additional, repeat services and reserves the right to amend the contract to incorporate additional similar work and funding at its sole discretion, contingent upon the availability of funding, and dependent on mutual agreement of the contract terms by the parties.

This does not guarantee additional work or funds.

BIDDER ELIGIBILITY: This solicitation is open to those Bidders that satisfy the minimum qualifications stated herein and that are available for work in Washington State.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	2
1.1 DEFINITIONS	2
1.2 ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF SOLICITATION ACTIVITIES	3
1.3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES	3
1.4 BACKGROUND	4
1.5 SCOPE OF WORK	4
1.6 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS	11
1.7 FUNDING	11
1.8 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE	12
1.9 ADA	12
2. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR BIDDERS	12
2.1 RFP COORDINATOR	12
2.2 PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE	12
2.3 INTERESTED SUBCONTRACTOR LIST	13
2.4 BIDDER QUESTIONS PERIOD	14
2.5 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS	14
2.6 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION / PUBLIC DISCLOSURE	14
2.7 AMENDMENTS, REVISIONS, OR UPDATES TO THE RFP	15
2.8 COMPLAINT PROCESS	15
2.9 RESPONSIVENESS	16
2.10 MOST FAVORABLE TERMS	16
2.11 RECEIPT OF INSUFFICIENT NUMBER OF PROPOSALS	16
2.12 NO OBLIGATION TO CONTRACT	16
2.13 REJECTION OF PROPOSALS	16
2.14 SUBCONTRACTOR PARTICIPATION MONITORING AND REPORTING	16
3. PROPOSAL CONTENTS AND REQUIREMENTS	17
3.1 PROPOSAL CONTENTS OVERVIEW	17
3.2 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES	17
3.3 BIDDER PROFILE AND SUBMITTAL FORM - MANDATORY	18
3.4 DIVERSE BUSINESS INCLUSION PLAN - MANDATORY	18
3.5 EXECUTIVE ORDER 18-03 - MANDATORY/SCORED	18
3.6 WA SMALL &/OR CERTIFIED VETERAN OWNED BUSINESS - MANDATORY/SCORED	19
3.7 WRITTEN PROPOSAL - MANDATORY/SCORED	19
3.8 COST PROPOSAL - MANDATORY/SCORED	19
3.9 DRAFT CONTRACT - MANDATORY	19
4. EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD	20
4.1 EVALUATION PROCEDURE	20
4.2 EVALUATION WEIGHTING AND SCORING	21
4.3 BEST AND FINAL OFFER (BAFO)	23
4.4 SUBSTANTIALLY EQUIVALENT SCORES	23
4.5 NOTIFICATION TO BIDDERS	23
4.6 DEBRIEFING OF UNSUCCESSFUL BIDDERS	23
4.7 PROTEST PROCEDURE	23
5. RFP EXHIBITS	26
ALL EXHIBITS ARE PROVIDED SEPARATELY	26
EXHIBIT A – INTERESTED SUBCONTRACTOR FORM	29
EXHIBIT B – BIDDER PROPOSAL PACKET	30
EXHIBIT C – DRAFT CONTRACT	31

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions for the purposes of this RFP include:

Apparent Successful Bidder (ASB) – The Bidder selected as the entity to perform the anticipated services under this RFP, subject to completion of contract negotiations and execution of a written contract.

Authorized Signatory – A person authorized to legally bind the Bidder to a contractual relationship (e.g., the President or Executive Director if a corporation, the managing partner if a partnership, or the proprietor if a sole proprietorship).

Bidder – Individual or company interested in the RFP that submits a proposal to attain a contract with the Health Care Authority.

Business Day – Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Pacific Time, except for holidays observed by the state of Washington, unless otherwise specified within the RFP.

Certified Peer – Is an individual who has completed either the 40-hour Certified Peer Counselor (CPC) course or the 80-hour Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) course and passed the applicable testing required to qualify for the associated credentialing provided through the Washington State Department of Health.

Certified Veteran Owned Business – A business within Washington State, certified by the Washington Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) that meets the specific ownership, control, and location requirements as defined in RCW 43.60A.190.

Health Care Authority (HCA) – An executive agency of the state of Washington that is issuing this RFP.

Peer - An individual who is receiving or who has received behavioral health services or a parent or legal guardian of a child who is receiving or who has received behavioral health services.

Peer Run Organization – An organization in which 51% or more of its employees are Peers as defined in this Section.

Proposal – A formal offer submitted in response to this solicitation. To be responsive, a Proposal must include all items outlined in Section 3, *Proposal Contents and Requirements*. Two such items that may be referred to throughout this document are:

- 1) **Written Proposal** – Bidder's written response as described in RFP section 3.7 and Section E of Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*.
- 2) **Cost Proposal** – Bidder's cost as described in RFP section 3.8 and Section F of Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*.

Request for Proposals (RFP) – Formal solicitation document in which a service or need is identified but no specific method to achieve it has been chosen. The purpose of an RFP is to permit the bidder community to suggest various approaches to meet the need at a given price.

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) – The laws of the state of Washington, as enacted by the Legislature. Any references to specific titles, chapters, or sections of the RCW includes any substitute, successor, or replacement title, chapter, or section. Pertinent RCW chapters can be accessed at: <http://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/>.

Subcontractor – A person, partnership, or entity not in the employment of or owned by the Bidder, who would be performing all or part of the services under this RFP under a separate contract with or on behalf of the Bidder. The term "Subcontractor" means Subcontractors in any tier.

Washington's Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) – An internet-based bid notification system HCA uses to post competitive solicitations. Individuals and firms interested in state contracting opportunities with the Department of Enterprise Services or any state agency should register for competitive solicitation notices on WEBS. *Note: There is no cost to register on WEBS – click here to learn more:* <https://des.wa.gov/sell/how-work-state>.

Washington Small Business – means the Bidder is a Washington Small Business as defined in RCW 39.26.010(22)

1.2 ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF SOLICITATION ACTIVITIES

Issue Request for Proposals	September 24, 2026
Pre-Proposal Conference	September 30, 2026 1:00PM
Bidder Questions Due	October 2, 2026 12:00PM
HCA Answers Posted*	October 5, 2026
Interested Subcontractor Responses Due	October 7, 2026 12:00PM
Interested Subcontractor List Posted*	October 8, 2026
Complaints Due (if applicable)	October 21, 2026 12:00PM
Proposals Due	October 28, 2026 12:00PM
Evaluate Proposals*	Oct 29 – Nov 10, 2026
Announce "Apparent Successful Bidder" via WEBS*	November 10, 2026
Debrief Request Deadline	November 16, 2026 12:00PM
Begin Contract Work	November 23, 2026

**Dates are anticipated and subject to change without an official amendment.*

HCA reserves the right in its sole discretion to revise the above schedule at any time.

1.3 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The Washington State Health Care Authority, hereafter called "HCA," is initiating this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit Proposals from firms interested in participating on a project to source a qualified Peer Run Organization to manage and host the 2027 Annual Peer Pathways Workforce Development Conference. The goal of this conference is to provide continuing education, networking opportunities, and skill building for Certified Peer Counselors (CPCs) and Certified Peer Support Specialists (CPSS) (Certified Peers), Peers, and Peer allies across Washington State. HCA is seeking a Washington based organization that values and understands the principles of recovery. The contractor will promote recovery and resiliency principles during the entire contract period in working with internal and external stakeholders and conference committee members. HCA is

committed to individual, youth, and family voice and choice in behavioral health services. The Certified Peer workforce is an effective resource promoting recovery and resiliency.

HCA seeks to make the best use of limited resources while providing the highest quality conference experience to a diverse group of attendees.

HCA intends to award one contract to provide the services described in this RFP.

1.4 BACKGROUND

The first annual Peer Pathways Workforce Development Conference was held in 2015 with 298 registered attendees. This conference provided an opportunity for Certified Peers to increase their knowledge base, skills, and an opportunity to network with Certified Peers across Washington State. Since 2015 the conference has grown to accommodate space for 425 Certified Peers, Peers, and Peer allies to attend. As the workforce of Certified Peers has increased along with increased need for Peer services, the need for continuing education and workforce development is essential. HCA is committed to providing this opportunity for workforce development, skill building, and networking.

Peer support services is a Medicaid service modality. Agencies are robustly using Peer support in a wide range of behavioral health programs, such as mental health, substance use, youth and family, supported housing, supportive employment, emergency rooms, and/or bridging programs. Peer support services have a substantial impact and have been proven to be successful in promoting wellness and recovery.

1.5 SCOPE OF WORK

This scope of work provides a high-level overview of the tasks and timelines the awarded Bidder will be responsible for completing. The contract awarded will include a Statement of Work with clear specifications and requirements outlined in greater detail. Any dates included below are projected based on the anticipated timeline but may be adjusted prior to contract execution.

1 PLANNING COMMITTEE

1.1 Establishing the Peer Pathways Conference Planning Committee

Coordinate with HCA to establish a Peer Pathways Conference Planning Committee (Planning Committee) to support and guide the development of the Conference.

1.1.1 The Planning Committee must consist of at least 75% Peers, as defined in RFP Section 1.1, *Definitions*, and include Peer representation from a wide range of stakeholder groups.

1.2 Coordination of Planning Committee Meetings

Facilitate and participate in the Planning Committee meetings, to be held a minimum of once per month, to assist HCA and the Planning Committee with the following:

1.2.1 General administrative activities as needed to successfully facilitate meeting communication.

1.2.2 Finalize conference planning timelines.

1.2.3 Prepare and manage conference budgets.

1.3 Status Reports

Present status reports at each meeting detailing the projects completed, upcoming items to be completed, and any other tasks in process.

2 WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT, UPDATES, AND MAINTENANCE

Provide project management for the transfer and management of the Peer Pathways website. This may include but is not limited to further development, updating, and maintaining current conference content and ensuring the website is available for participant registration.

2.1 Development

Using the previous year's conference website as an example or guide, Contractor shall work in coordination with HCA Contract Manager to update images, colors, and page layouts to align with the annual artwork design and color themes. Digital and print media graphic staff must work with HCA Contract Manager and Planning Committee to finalize the design.

2.2 Publishing

Prepare and publish Conference content for the website including, but not limited to registration, forms, scholarship opportunities, conference program agenda, activities, presentations, and presenters.

2.3 Website and Electronic Components

Contractor shall coordinate with HCA Contract Manager to ensure full compliance of all Electronic Components and/or the elements and functionalities of any Website developed and/or managed in the course of this work with HCA's communication and technology standards and guidelines.

3 VENUE

The Conference must be held in August 2027 on the date to be identified by HCA and in a location and venue approved by the HCA Contract Manager. The conference shall be planned for a maximum of 425 people, including all participants and presenters.

3.1 Conference Venue Proposal

Submit a conference venue Proposal with a minimum of three (3) conference venue options to the HCA Contract Manager. The Proposal must be submitted in writing, via email, and include the following details for each potential conference venue:

- 3.1.1 Venue cost, availability, and capacity;
- 3.1.2 Food and beverage service pricing;
- 3.1.3 AV and other technology services and pricing;
- 3.1.4 Proximity, pricing, and capacity of hotels for lodging.
 - 3.1.4.1 Hotels proposed for lodging must accept Washington State per diem rates.
 - 3.1.4.2 Specify if per-diem rate lodging is available at any of the proposed conference venue locations.

- 3.2 Contractor shall assume all costs for use of the conference venue including, but not limited to, audiovisual fees. Contractor should make every effort to include parking fees in venue cost.

- 3.3 The venue must be approved in writing by the HCA Contract Manager prior to reservation and/or payment.

- 3.3.1 After obtaining HCA approval, execute venue, audio/visual, security, and catering contracts as needed to facilitate the conference.

- 3.4 The selected venue must meet established standards, and must include the following:

- 3.4.1 One room that will comfortably hold 425 people for general sessions.
 - 3.4.2 Facilities/classrooms sufficient for presenter workshops to be held three (3) times per Conference day. The workshop facilities/classrooms must have a total capacity of at

- 3.4.3 least 400 participants, broken out as follows:
 - 3.4.3.1 Five (5) facilities/classrooms with a capacity of 30-40 persons each; and
 - 3.4.3.2 Four (4) facilities/classrooms with a capacity of 50-60 persons each.

4 CATERING

Contractor must contract to provide catering for the two (2) days of the conference for a maximum of 425 people, including participants and presenters.

4.1 Office of Financial Management Guidelines

Catering and refreshments must be provided in compliance with Washington State's Office of Financial Management guidelines and rates as outlined in the State Administrative and Accounting Manual (**SAAM**): <https://ofm.wa.gov/accounting/saam/>.

4.1.1 Meeting Refreshments: <https://ofm.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/70.10.pdf>

4.1.2 Meeting Meals: <https://ofm.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/70.15.pdf>

4.1.3 Per Diem Rate Tables: <https://ofm.wa.gov/accounting/travel/per-diem-rate-tables/>

4.2 Conference Day Refreshments

Catered refreshments for both Conference days must include:

- 4.2.1 Light breakfast and coffee/tea to be provided both mornings of the conference;
- 4.2.2 Lunch must be provided at noon for a maximum of 425 participants;
- 4.2.3 An afternoon snack; and
- 4.2.4 Water stations sufficient to serve all Conference participants.

4.3 Dietary Accommodations

Contractor must collect the special dietary requirements of participants upon registration and make every attempt to accommodate the identified special dietary needs according to established practices.

5 STAFFING

Contractor shall coordinate with the HCA Contract Manager to develop a work plan to ensure sufficient staffing for the duration of the conference. This must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- 5.1 Providing staff for the registration desk, hospitality room, food and beverage services, and as needed to facilitate conference proceedings;
- 5.2 Scheduling, training, and management of any conference volunteers;
- 5.3 Providing Contractor staff to act as an on-site liaison with conference and/or venue managers;
- 5.4 Provide a minimum of four (4) Contractor staff members on-site at the conference venue for the duration of the conference;
- 5.5 Ensure secure access at the venue for conference set-up, including registration and exhibitor tables; and
- 5.6 Provide local coordination and support with venue staff, presenters, and conference participants prior to, during, and after the conference.

6 REGISTRATION

Contractor is responsible for implementing and managing registration for all participants and presenters attending the Conference. This must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- 6.1 Design, update, or source an online registration system.

- 6.2 Design or update a registration form, to include all Conference details as requested by HCA.
- 6.3 Design, prepare content, print, and distribute conference registration information, related forms, and links.
- 6.4 Post registration information on the Conference website.
- 6.5 Design and update the registration and scholarship systems, including all information requested by the HCA Contract Manager.
- 6.6 Registration must be open for participants beginning May 10, 2027.
 - 6.6.1 Registration may open on a different date if agreed upon and approved by the HCA Contract Manager in writing.
- 6.7 Process participant registrations, send paper or online confirmation notices, process and track related payments.
- 6.8 **Registration Fees**
 - 6.8.1 Contractor may charge participants a registration fee of no more than \$150 for full conference participation.
 - 6.8.2 All registration fees collected by Contractor must be used for conference expenses, such as presenters, lodging, catering, and scholarship costs.
 - 6.8.3 Participants who qualify for scholarships must not be charged a registration fee.
- 6.9 **Registration Reports**

Contractor shall provide regular Registration Reports detailing the registration numbers for both presenters and participants, including scholarship status as applicable.

 - 6.9.1 The Registration Reports must be presented at each Planning Committee meeting and submitted to the HCA Contract Manager at the following cadence:
 - 6.9.1.1 Between June 1, 2027, and July 30, 2027, twice per month on the first (1st) and fifteenth (15th) of each month; and
 - 6.9.1.2 From August 1, 2027, until one (1) week following the Conference, once per week with the final report provided the week following the Conference.
 - a. Facilitate and track participant sign-in for both days the conference is held. Include a summary of the Conference attendance numbers in the final Registration Report, including the ratio of registered participants to those that actually attended the Conference.

7 CONFERENCE PRESENTERS

Contractor shall coordinate with the Planning Committee to select, secure, manage, and support all Conference presenters including keynote speaker(s), workshop facilitators, and table exhibitors.

7.1 Keynote Speaker(s)

- 7.1.1 Coordinate with the Planning Committee to select and secure keynote speaker(s) for the Conference. Presentation
- 7.1.2 Coordinate travel and lodging needs for keynote speaker(s), as applicable.
- 7.1.3 Process and execute all keynote speaker contracts and payments including any negotiated fees and/or travel expenses, as applicable.
 - 7.1.3.1 Conference registration fees shall be waived for the selected keynote speaker(s).

- 7.1.3.2 Keynote speaker(s) traveling more than fifty (50) miles must be offered lodging and travel re-imbursements for travel assistance.
- 7.1.3.3 Any costs or fees related to securing the selected keynote speaker(s) must be submitted to the HCA Contract Manager for review via email. Written approval must be received prior to any expenditure.

7.2 Presenters

Coordinate with the Planning Committee to identify and source Conference presenters and workshop facilitators. Contractor shall manage and track the selection process in its entirety including, but not limited to, the following:

- 7.2.1 The solicitation of applications for the various Conference presenters.
- 7.2.2 Facilitate the Planning Committee's review of all applications including access to all application documents, reviewing materials, and technical assistance if needed.
 - 7.2.2.1 The Planning Committee shall have three (3) full weeks to review and rate the applications.
- 7.2.3 Compile all Planning Committee ratings and include the final recommendation to the HCA Contract Manager for final approval via email.
 - 7.2.3.1 HCA feedback and/or approval will be provided within five (5) Business Days.
 - 7.2.3.2 HCA written approval must be secured prior to contracting with any of the selected presenters.

7.3 Table Exhibitors

Contractor may solicit table exhibitors for both Conference days and negotiate a fair market table fee to charge for each participating exhibitor.

- 7.3.1 Any table fees collected must be sufficient to cover the applicable registration and refreshment fees for two (2) exhibitors per table.
- 7.3.2 Any amount exceeding these costs must be used to support other Conference expenses such as presenters, catering, lodging, and scholarship costs.
- 7.3.3 Each exhibitor is limited to a maximum of two (2) registrations per table.

7.4 Logistics Coordination

In collaboration with HCA, coordinate all speaker/presenter logistics for the Conference. This must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- 7.4.1 The HCA Contract Manager may make recommendations or direct Contractor to seek out specific keynote speaker(s) and/or presenters. Contractor shall make every reasonable effort to secure keynote speaker(s) as recommended.
- 7.4.2 Schedule coordination for all conference presenters and send confirmation letters to presenters, email or hardcopy., indicating their designated presentation slot(s).
- 7.4.3 Submit to HCA Contract Manager all presenter contact information, bios, and photos to be used for promotional materials.
- 7.4.4 Coordinate with all presenters to obtain electronic copies of presentation materials or handouts, obtain written permission to post them, and then post the approved materials on the appropriate Conference website.
 - 7.4.4.1 If applicable, design, prepare content, print, and distribute any conference related presenter materials.

- 7.4.5 Determine which of the selected speakers/presenters will be providing Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for the Certified Peer Support Specialist (CPSS) credential and
- 7.4.6 facilitate the process necessary to award CEUs to the qualifying participants.
- 7.4.7 Coordinate facility and audio/visual needs for all presenters.
- 7.4.8 Provide support for all presenters throughout the conference.
- 7.4.9 Process and execute all speaker and presenter contracts to include the presentation content, payment or fees, and travel expenses as negotiated and if applicable.
 - 7.4.9.1 Contractor shall manage the collection of any presenter fees and/or payments to keynote speaker(s) as negotiated.

7.5 Evaluations

Contractor shall facilitate the evaluation of all Conference presentations. This must include, but is not limited to, the following:

- 7.5.1 Evaluation Management
 - Dissemination and collection of the evaluation form following each presentation utilizing the evaluation form template to be provided by HCA.
- 7.5.2 Evaluation Report
 - No more than 30 calendar days following the Conference, Contractor shall:
 - 7.5.2.1 Distribute the individual presentation evaluation results to each presenter via email; and
 - 7.5.2.2 Submit a report summarizing the evaluation outcomes to the HCA Contract Manager via email.

7.6 Agenda

Contractor shall create a working agenda and coordinate logistics for all presenters.

- 7.6.1 Based on the Planning Committee's report, Contractor shall create a draft Conference agenda with all presenter bios, photos, and any relevant contact information to be used for promotional materials.
 - 7.6.1.1 The draft Conference agenda must be submitted to the HCA Contract Manager for review and approval by May 3, 2027.
- 7.6.2 If any of the selected presenters provide handouts or other Conference materials Contractor shall:
 - 7.6.2.1 Obtain written permission from the presenters for use of the materials; and
 - 7.6.2.2 Incorporate the provided materials into the applicable Conference marketing materials, e.g., the Website, agenda, program, etc.

8 SCHOLARSHIPS, LODGING, AND TRAVEL

Contractor must facilitate the management of scholarships, lodging, and travel for the Conference. HCA has a set, maximum allowance of \$25,000 for costs associated with the management of scholarships, lodging, and travel.

8.1 Scholarships

Contractor shall assist in the development of the scholarship criteria in coordination with HCA.

- 8.1.1 The final scholarship criteria shall be agreed upon by both parties prior to the beginning of the registration process but must require the recipients of the conference scholarships demonstrate the following at a minimum:

- 8.1.1.1 They are actively employed or volunteering as either a Peer Counselor; or Certified Peer Support Specialist;
- 8.1.1.2 Are committed to attend the conference and participate in continuing education opportunities; and
- 8.1.1.3 Demonstrate at least one (1) of the following:
 - a. There are no resources available through the participant's employer; or
 - b. There is a clear financial need for the scholarship.

8.1.2 Participants who qualify for scholarship must not be charged a registration fee.

8.2 Lodging and Travel Assistance

For scholarship participants traveling over fifty (50) miles, Contractor must provide travel assistance to the extent funds are available within the maximum allowance established for scholarships, and in compliance with Washington State's travel reimbursement guidelines, as prescribed in the State Administrative & Accounting Manual:

<https://www.ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/legacy/policy/10.htm>.

8.2.1 Lodging and travel assistance to be provided must be approved in writing by the HCA Contract Manager prior to any related expenditure.

9 MARKETING MATERIALS

Contractor shall develop all Conference related advertising, signage, programs, and name tags in coordination with the Planning Committee. Contractor is also responsible for all Conference related printing, advertising, signage, program, and name tags. This must include, but is not limited to, the following:

9.1 Conference Program

- 9.1.1 Develop and print Conference programs in color using the HCA format from the 2025 conference, or other program format as provided by the HCA Contract Manager.
- 9.1.2 The draft program must be submitted to the HCA Contract Manager no less than two (2) weeks prior to printing.
- 9.1.3 The final version of the program must be approved by the HCA Contract Manager in writing prior to printing.

9.2 Save the Date Flyer

Develop and distribute a "save the date flyer" at the earliest date possible, but no later than April 5, 2027.

- 9.2.1 The draft flyer must be submitted to HCA and approved in writing by the HCA Contract Manager no less than two (2) weeks prior to printing and/or dissemination, or no later than March 22, 2027.
- 9.2.2 Contractor must provide a digital copy of the final version of the Save the Date flyer to the HCA Contract Manager once approved.

9.3 Conference Flyer

Design and distribute a Conference flyer no later than July 1, 2027.

- 9.3.1 The flyer must include, to the degree possible, the presenters and presentation topics for the Conference.
- 9.3.2 The final version of the program must be approved in writing by the HCA Contract Manager and HCA's Communications office prior to printing and/or dissemination.

9.3.3 Contractor must provide a digital copy of the final version of the flyer to the HCA Contract Manager once approved.

9.4 **Signage and Name Tags**

Contractor is responsible for name tags and all signage as appropriate for the Conference.

9.5 **Conference Takeaways**

Solicit and/or purchase Conference takeaways for conference participants and presenters.

9.5.1 Prepare and manage distribution of HCA branded Conference takeaways to participants at the Conference.

9.5.2 Prepare and manage distribution of post-Conference takeaways for all Conference presenters.

9.5.3 All Conference takeaways and any designs must be approved in writing by the HCA Contract Manager prior to purchase or any other related expenditure.

1.6 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The following are the minimum qualifications for Bidders:

- A. Licensed to do business in the state of Washington or provide a commitment that it will become licensed in Washington within 30 calendar days of being selected as the Apparent Successful Bidder (ASB).
- B. Have a minimum of 2 years' experience with conference or large event facilitation, planning, and hosting in Washington State.
- C. Be a Peer Run Organization as defined herein which is dedicated to behavioral health recovery support services with headquarters located in Washington State.
 - i. Peer Run Organization – An organization in which 51% or more of its employees are Peers.
 - ii. Peer - An individual who is receiving or who has received behavioral health services or a parent or legal guardian of a child who is receiving or who has received behavioral health services.
- D. Have the staff capacity to ensure a Certified Peer as the Project Lead for the duration of the contract.

1.7 FUNDING

HCA has budgeted a total contract amount not to exceed two hundred and eighty thousand dollars (**\$280,000**) for this project. This total contract amount includes funding to be set aside and utilized for only the following:

- **\$25,000** for Scholarships for eligible Conference participants; and
- **\$20,000** for conference branded takeaways.

The winning Bidder will manage these funds and be reimbursed for qualifying expenses related to the scholarships and branded takeaways, but these funds must not be included in the Bidders' Proposals. Therefore, Proposals in excess of \$235,000 will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated.

Any contract awarded as a result of this solicitation is contingent upon the availability of funding.

1.8 PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

The period of performance of any contract resulting from this RFP is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about November 23, 2026, and to end on September 30, 2032. Amendments to incorporate additional services and funding, if any, will be at the sole discretion of HCA.

HCA anticipates the need for additional, repeat services and reserves the right to amend the contract to incorporate additional similar work and funding at its sole discretion, contingent upon the availability of funding, and dependent on mutual agreement of the contract terms by the parties.

This does not guarantee additional work or funds.

1.9 ADA

HCA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Bidders may contact the RFP Coordinator to receive written information in another format (e.g., large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, and other formats).

2. GENERAL INFORMATION FOR BIDDERS

2.1 RFP COORDINATOR

The RFP Coordinator is the sole point of contact in HCA for this solicitation. All communication between the Bidder and HCA upon release of this RFP must be with the RFP Coordinator, as follows:

Name	Cassie Bryden
Email Address	HCAProcurements@hca.wa.gov

Any other communication will be considered unofficial and non-binding on HCA. Bidders are to rely on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator. Communication directed to parties other than the RFP Coordinator may result in disqualification of the Bidder.

2.2 PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

A pre-Proposal conference is scheduled to be held on September 30, 2026, at 1:00PM, Pacific Time via a video-conferencing tool at HCA's discretion. All prospective Bidders should attend; however, attendance is not mandatory. Please use the Microsoft Teams Meeting link and information provided below:

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/288792559834624?p=iyJle8z5iMeeQ3zmkz>

Meeting ID: 288 792 559 834 624

Passcode: nP3Jr9Xb

Dial in by Phone:

[+1 564-999-2000](tel:+15649992000), [502696056#](tel:+15649992000) United States, Olympia

[833\) 322-1218](tel:+18333221218), [502696056#](tel:+15649992000) United States (Toll-free)

[Find a local number](#)

HCA will be bound only to HCA written answers to questions. Questions arising at the pre-Proposal conference or in subsequent communication with the RFP Coordinator will be documented and answered in written form. A copy of the questions and answers will be posted on Washington's Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) as an Amendment to this RFP.

2.3 INTERESTED SUBCONTRACTOR LIST

HCA supports and encourages contracts and subcontracts with Washington small, diverse, and certified veteran-owned businesses. To support participation in this process, HCA will provide a list of interested Subcontractor firms as an amendment to this RFP. The Interested Subcontractor List (List) will be compiled based on the timely and complete submission of specific information as requested in this section. HCA is providing this List to ensure prime Bidders are aware of the capabilities of smaller firms interested in becoming Subcontractors to perform specific components of this RFP's Scope of Work.

A. Interested Subcontractor Form Instructions

Failure to follow the instructions in this Section may prevent your information from being included in the List.

- i. An interested firm must complete the provided *Interested Subcontractor Form* (included as a separate document, Exhibit A) to submit their firm name, contact information, WA small and/or Certified Veteran Owned Business and Peer Run Organization status, and a summary of their capabilities as they relate to this RFP's Scope of Work.
- ii. Submissions are limited to what is requested in the *Interested Subcontractor Form* and capability summaries must be two paragraphs or less.
- iii. The RFP Coordinator will only include the information requested in the *Interested Subcontractor Form*. Do not submit marketing materials.

Submissions must be emailed to the RFP Coordinator, by the date specified in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*, with the subject line:

"RFP #2026HCA15 Interested Subcontractor Form – [INTERESTED SUBCONTRACTOR FIRM NAME]"
- iv. All materials submitted for the Interested Subcontractor List becomes a public record.

B. Posting Date

Complete and timely submissions will be compiled and posted in alphabetical order by interested Subcontractor firm name. HCA anticipates the List will be posted as an RFP amendment on the *Interested Subcontractor List Posted* date identified in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*. Late or incomplete submissions will not be posted.

C. Information Provided As-Is

The Interested Subcontractor List is provided as an opportunity to support participation in this RFP. HCA provides this information as a courtesy with no warranties or representations as to any party and no guarantee of a subcontract. The Interested Subcontractor List shall not be construed as an endorsement by the state of Washington or HCA. The interested firm is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of their submission.

2.4 BIDDER QUESTIONS PERIOD

Bidders are provided an opportunity to ask questions during the Bidder question period which starts on the date of the RFP posting and concludes on the *Questions Due* date specified in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*.

- A. Questions regarding the RFP will only be accepted in writing, sent by email to the RFP Coordinator. The Bidder must use the following email subject line when submitting questions: **"RFP 2026HCA15 Question(s) – [BIDDER NAME]"** to ensure timely receipt.
- B. HCA anticipates it will post answers to the questions in WEBS as an RFP amendment on the *Answers Posted* date specified in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*.
- C. HCA is under no obligation to respond to any questions received after the *Questions Due* date but may do so at its discretion.

2.5 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals must be received by the RFP Coordinator no later than the *Proposal Due* deadline in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*. Proposals must be submitted electronically as an attachment to an email to the RFP Coordinator at the email address listed in Section 2.1, *RFP Coordinator*, and meet the following requirements:

- A. Attachments to email must be in Microsoft Word format or PDF.
- B. Zipped files cannot be received by HCA and cannot be used for submission of Proposals.
- C. The forms and certifications that require signature, as designated in Section 3.1, *Proposal Contents Overview*, must have the signature of an Authorized Signatory as defined in Section 1.1, *Definitions*.
- D. HCA does not assume responsibility for problems with Bidders' email. If HCA email is not working, appropriate allowances will be made.

Bidders should allow sufficient time to ensure timely receipt of the Proposal by the RFP Coordinator. Late Proposals will not be accepted and will be automatically disqualified from further consideration, unless HCA email is found to be at fault or HCA deems a grace period is in the best interest of the State. All Proposals and any accompanying documentation become the property of HCA and will not be returned.

2.6 PROPRIETARY INFORMATION / PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

Proposals submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of HCA. All Proposals received will remain confidential until the ASB is announced; thereafter, the Proposals will be deemed public records as defined in chapter 42.56 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

Any information in the Proposal that the Bidder desires to claim as proprietary and exempt from disclosure under chapter 42.56 RCW, or other state or federal law that provides for the nondisclosure of a document, must be clearly designated. Each page claimed to be exempt from disclosure must:

- A. Identify the specific exemption relied upon, or
- B. Include a statement explaining why the information is exempt; and

- C. Be clearly designated as “*confidential*” or “*proprietary*” in the bottom right corner of each applicable page.

General markings such as “confidential” or “proprietary” applied to an entire Proposal will not be honored. Each exemption claim must be specific to the page and the type of information withheld.

If a public records request is made for information the Bidder has designated as exempt, HCA will notify the Bidder. The Bidder will then have the responsibility to obtain a court order enjoining disclosure. If the Bidder fails to obtain such an order, HCA will release the information as required by law.

No fee will be charged for inspection of contract files, but 24 hours’ notice to the RFP Coordinator is required. All requests for information should be directed to the RFP Coordinator.

The submission of any public records request to HCA pertaining in any way to this RFP will not affect the solicitation schedule, as outlined in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*, unless HCA, in its sole discretion, determines that altering the schedule would be in HCA’s best interests.

2.7 AMENDMENTS, REVISIONS, OR UPDATES TO THE RFP

If HCA determines in its sole discretion that it is necessary to amend, revise, or update any part of this RFP, then HCA will publish addenda on WEBS. For this purpose, the published questions and answers and any other pertinent information will be provided as an addendum to the RFP and will be published on WEBS.

HCA also reserves the right to cancel or to reissue the RFP in whole or in part, prior to execution of a contract.

2.8 COMPLAINT PROCESS

The complaint process allows potential Bidders to focus on the solicitation requirements and evaluation process and raise issues early enough in the process to allow HCA to correct a problem before Proposals are submitted. The complaint period starts on the date of the RFP posting and concludes on the *Complaints Due* date identified in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*.

- A. Potential Bidders may submit a complaint to HCA based on any of the following:
 - i. The RFP unnecessarily restricts competition;
 - ii. The RFP evaluation or scoring process is unfair or unclear; or
 - iii. The RFP requirements are inadequate or insufficient to prepare a response.
- B. For a complaint to be considered, it must be received by HCA by 12:00PM Pacific Time on the *Complaints Due* date identified in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*. The complaint must:
 - i. Be in writing;
 - ii. Be sent to the RFP Coordinator, or designee;
 - iii. Clearly articulate the basis for the complaint; and
 - iv. Include a proposed remedy.

C. HCA will address any complaint as follows:

- i. The RFP Coordinator, or designee, will respond to the complaint in writing.
- ii. The response to the complaint and any changes to the RFP will be posted on WEBS.
- iii. The Director of HCA will be notified of all complaints and will be provided a copy of HCA's response.

Complaints may not be raised again during a protest and HCA's action or inaction in response to a complaint will be final. There is no appeal process.

2.9 RESPONSIVENESS

The RFP Coordinator will review all Proposals to determine compliance with administrative requirements and instructions specified in this RFP. A Bidder's failure to comply with any part of the RFP may result in rejection of the Proposal as non-responsive.

HCA also reserves the right at its sole discretion to waive minor administrative irregularities.

2.10 MOST FAVORABLE TERMS

HCA reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the Proposal submitted. Therefore, the Proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms which the Bidder can propose. HCA reserves the right to contact a Bidder for clarification of its Proposal.

The ASB should be prepared to accept this RFP for incorporation into a contract resulting from this RFP. The contract resulting from this RFP will incorporate some, or all, of the Bidder's Proposal. The Proposal will become a part of the official solicitation file on this matter without obligation to HCA.

2.11 RECEIPT OF INSUFFICIENT NUMBER OF PROPOSALS

If HCA receives only one responsive Proposal as a result of this RFP, HCA reserves the right to either: 1) directly negotiate and contract with the Bidder; or 2) not award any contract at all. HCA may continue to have the Bidder complete the entire RFP. HCA is under no obligation to tell the Bidder if it is the only Bidder.

2.12 NO OBLIGATION TO CONTRACT

This RFP does not obligate HCA to enter into any contract for services specified herein.

2.13 REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

HCA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any and all Proposals received without penalty and not to issue any contract as a result of this RFP.

2.14 SUBCONTRACTOR PARTICIPATION MONITORING AND REPORTING

Pursuant to Executive Order 22-01, Equity in Public Contracting (dated 01/07/2022), Bidders using Subcontractors for any part of this work will be subject to the requirements of this section if awarded a contract as a result of this solicitation.

Once a contract is awarded through the solicitation process, the awarded contractor is obligated to complete a new vendor registration in Access Equity. Access Equity (B2Gnow) is a secure business diversity management system available online at <https://omwbe.diversitycompliance.com/>.

Confidential Information (e.g., Tax ID, etc.) will not be published in Access Equity. contractors that have previously registered with B2Gnow for any public entity must verify and ensure that Access Equity contains their most up-to-date registration information. contractors can navigate online to Access Equity 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/>.

During the contract term, the contractor will report monthly payments to all relevant Subcontractors in Access Equity. Monthly reporting information includes total dollar payments made to relevant Subcontractors, payment dates, and any additional information required to verify payment to Subcontractors. The contractor will enter this payment information into Access Equity, and the Subcontractors will verify this payment information in the system. This requirement applies to both contractors and Subcontractors. Online training is available through Access Equity.

3. PROPOSAL CONTENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

3.1 PROPOSAL CONTENTS OVERVIEW

Proposals must be submitted per the instructions in Sections 2.6, *Submission of Proposals*, and 3.2, *Proposal Requirements and Guidelines*, in the order noted below.

- ☐ EXHIBIT B: Bidder Proposal Packet – which must include the following sections:
 - ☐ A: Bidder Profile and Submittal Form - MANDATORY (*See section 3.3.*)
 - ☐ B: Diverse Business Inclusion Plan - MANDATORY (*See section 3.4.*)
 - ☐ C: Executive Order 18-03 – Worker's Rights - MANDATORY/SCORED (*See section 3.5*)
 - ☐ D: WA Small and/or Certified Veteran Owned Business Certification - MANDATORY/SCORED (*See section 3.6.*)
 - ☐ E: Written Proposal - MANDATORY/SCORED (*See section 3.9.*)
 - ☐ F: Cost Proposal - MANDATORY/SCORED (*See section 3.10.*)
- ☐ EXHIBIT C: Redline Draft Contract (*See section 3.8 below.*)
 - *Exhibit C is to be included as a separate attachment only if applicable.*

3.2 PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

Proposals must comply with the requirements and restrictions listed below. Failure to do so may result in the disqualification of the Bidder's Proposal:

- A. State the Bidder's full legal name on the first or cover page of the Proposal.
- B. Proposals must provide information in the same order as presented in this RFP and with the same headings. Title and number each item in the same way it appears in the RFP. Each question must be restated prior to the Bidder's response.

- A. Items marked “**MANDATORY**” must be included as part of the Proposal for the Proposal to be considered responsive; however, these items are not scored.
- B. Items marked “**MANDATORY / SCORED**” must be included as part of the Proposal for the Proposal to be considered responsive and will be awarded points by the evaluation team.
- C. Page limits stated in this RFP are determined by counting single sides of the response. HCA has no obligation to read, consider, or score any material exceeding the stated page limits. There will be no grounds for protest if critical information is on the pages exceeding the specified page limit that is not reviewed.
- D. Bidders are liable for all errors or omissions contained in their Proposals. Bidders will not be allowed to alter Proposal documents after the deadline for Proposal submission. HCA is not liable for any errors in Proposals.

HCA is under no obligation to consider any supplemental materials submitted that were not requested.

3.3 BIDDER PROFILE AND SUBMITTAL FORM - MANDATORY

Section A of Exhibit B - *Bidder Proposal Packet*

The Bidder Profile and Submittal Form must be completed in its entirety and signed and dated by an Authorized Signatory, a person authorized to legally bind the Bidder to a contractual relationship (e.g., the President or Executive Director if a corporation, the managing partner if a partnership, or the proprietor if a sole proprietorship).

3.4 DIVERSE BUSINESS INCLUSION PLAN - MANDATORY

Section B of Exhibit B - *Bidder Proposal Packet*

The Diverse Business Inclusion Plan must be completed in its entirety when submitted. In accordance with legislative findings and policies set forth in RCW 39.19 the state of Washington encourages participation in all contracts by firms certified by the Office of Minority and Women’s Business Enterprises (OMWBE), set forth in RCW 43.60A.200 for firms certified by the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs, and set forth in RCW 39.26.005 for firms that are Washington Small Businesses. Participation may be either on a direct basis or on a Subcontractor basis. However, no preference on the basis of participation is included in the evaluation of Diverse Business Inclusion Plans submitted, and no minimum level of minority- and women-owned business enterprise, Washington Small Business, or Certified Veteran Owned Business participation is required as a condition for receiving an award. Any affirmative action requirements set forth in any federal governmental regulations included or referenced in the contract documents will apply.

3.5 EXECUTIVE ORDER 18-03 - MANDATORY/SCORED

Section C of Exhibit B - *Bidder Proposal Packet*

Bidder must review and complete the Executive Order 18-03 form, provided as Section C of Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*, by identifying whether the Bidder requires its employees, as a condition of employment, to sign or agree to mandatory individual arbitration clauses and class or collective action waivers.

3.6 WA SMALL &/OR CERTIFIED VETERAN OWNED BUSINESS - MANDATORY/SCORED

Section D of Exhibit B - *Bidder Proposal Packet*

HCA encourages the use of Washington Small Businesses and/or Certified Veteran-Owned Businesses for Proposal and contract opportunities. HCA will evaluate Proposals for best value and will provide a point preference in the amount of 20 points to any Bidder who certifies, pursuant to the Washington Small and/or Certified Veteran Owned Business Certification form that Bidder qualifies as a Washington Small Business or a Certified Veteran-Owned Business.

3.7 WRITTEN PROPOSAL - MANDATORY/SCORED

Section E of Exhibit B - *Bidder Proposal Packet*

The Written Proposal must be completed in its entirety in accordance with the page limits identified therein. Bidder must respond using the Bidder Proposal Packet as its template, to ensure compliance with the formatting requirements.

3.8 COST PROPOSAL - MANDATORY/SCORED

Section F of Exhibit B - *Bidder Proposal Packet*

The Cost Proposal table template must be completed in its entirety in accordance with the instructions therein and submitted using the table template form provided to ensure compliance with the formatting requirements.

A. Maximum Cost

- i. The maximum cost proposed for this contract must be two hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars (**\$235,000**) or less to be considered responsive to this RFP.
- ii. The evaluation process is designed to award this solicitation not necessarily to the Bidder of least cost, but rather to the Bidder whose Proposal best meets the requirements of this RFP. However, Bidders are encouraged to submit Proposals which are consistent with state government efforts to conserve state resources.

B. Identification of Costs

- i. Identify all costs in U.S. dollars including expenses to be charged for performing the services necessary to accomplish the objectives of the contract. The Bidder is to submit a fully detailed budget including staff costs, estimates for any applicable sales and use taxes (see section ii immediately below), and any expenses necessary to accomplish the tasks and to produce the deliverables under the contract.
- ii. ASB(s) will be required to collect Washington State sales and use taxes from HCA, as applicable, and for remittance of payment to the Washington State Department of Revenue (DOR). Bidders must identify any expenses to which Washington State sales and use taxes apply in the Cost Proposal and include an estimated amount for such taxes (based on the current tax rate(s)). HCA understands these amounts may fluctuate as tax rates fluctuate. If a tax isn't specifically identified, HCA will assume it is included in the costs identified.

3.9 DRAFT CONTRACT - MANDATORY

The ASB will be expected to enter into a contract which is substantially the same as the sample

contract and its general terms and conditions attached as Exhibit C, *Draft Contract*. HCA will not accept any draft contracts prepared by any Bidder. The Bidder must be prepared to agree to all terms of the attached Exhibit C, *Draft Contract*, as presented, or the Proposal may be rejected.

To fulfill this requirement Bidders must ensure the following:

- A. If Bidder has exceptions to the Exhibit C, *Draft Contract*, terms and conditions, they must include with their Proposal a copy of the Draft Contract with redline edits/comments documenting the changes they propose to be made if selected as ASB and identify this addition by checking "YES" in Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*, Section 4(g)
 - i. If the Bidder fails to identify an objection to any particular term or condition, the term or condition will be deemed agreed to by the Bidder. HCA will review requested exceptions and accept or reject the same at its sole discretion.
- B. If the Bidder has NO EXCEPTIONS to the Exhibit C, *Draft Contract*, terms and conditions please indicate acceptance in Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*, Section A, *Bidder Profile and Submittal Form*, question #4(g) by checking "NO".

If, after the announcement of the ASB, and after a reasonable period of time, the ASB and HCA cannot reach agreement on acceptable terms for the Contract, the HCA may cancel the selection and Award the Contract to the next most qualified Bidder.

4. EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

4.1 EVALUATION PROCEDURE

Responsive Proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this RFP and any addenda issued. The evaluation of Proposals will be accomplished by an evaluation team, to be designated by HCA, which will determine the ranking of the Proposals. Evaluation teams could be comprised of internal (HCA) and external individuals. Evaluations will only be based upon information provided in the Bidder's Proposal.

- A. All Proposals received by the stated deadline in Section 1.2, *Estimated Schedule of Solicitation Activities*, will be reviewed by the RFP Coordinator to ensure that they contain all of the required information requested in the RFP. Only responsive Proposals that meet the requirements will be evaluated by the evaluation team. Any Bidder who does not meet the stated qualifications or any Proposal that does not contain all the required information will be rejected as non-responsive.
- B. HCA may, at its sole discretion, waive minor administrative irregularities.
- C. The RFP Coordinator may, at their sole discretion, contact the Bidder for clarification of any portion of the Bidder's Proposal. Bidders should take every precaution to ensure that all answers are clear, complete, and directly address the specific requirement.
- D. Responsive Written Proposals will be reviewed and scored by an evaluation team using the weighted scoring system described in Section 4.2, *Evaluation Weighting and Scoring*. Written Proposals will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements set forth in this RFP and any addenda issued.
- E. The evaluation of the Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*, Sections C, D, and F will be completed by the RFP Coordinator.
- F. HCA reserves the right to award the contract to the Bidder whose proposal is deemed to be in the best interest of HCA and the state of Washington.

4.2 EVALUATION WEIGHTING AND SCORING

Bidders' final scores will be based on the following scored sections in Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*:

A. Executive Order 18-03 - Exhibit B, Section C – 5 POINTS MAX

Pursuant to RCW 39.26.160(3) and consistent with Executive Order 18-03 – Supporting Workers' Rights to Effectively Address Workplace Violations (dated June 12, 2018), HCA will evaluate Proposals for best value and provide a preference in the amount of 5 points to any Bidder who certifies, pursuant to the certification included in Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*, Section C, 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 waiver. Bidders that do require their employees, as a condition of employment, to sign or agree to mandatory individual arbitration clauses or class or collective action waiver will not be disqualified from evaluation of this RFP, however they will receive 0 out of the 5 points possible for this Section.

B. WA Small and/or Certified Veteran Owned Businesses - Exhibit B, Section D – 20 POINTS MAX

Pursuant to Department of Enterprise Services (DES) Policy DES-090-06, and in furtherance of Washington's business inclusion goals, HCA will evaluate bids for best value and will provide a bid preference in the amount of 20 points to any Bidder who certifies, pursuant to Exhibit B, Section D, that Bidder qualifies as a Washington Small Business or a Certified Veteran-Owned Business.

C. Written Proposal - Exhibit B, Section E – 75 POINTS MAX

Each question in Section C, *Written Proposal*, has been assigned a weight. Points will be assigned to each question based upon the average of all evaluation team members scores for the question (0-10) multiplied by the weight indicated below. Individual question scores will then be combined to result in the Bidder's total weighted score. Any point calculations that result in decimal points will be rounded to the nearest whole number. The weight and maximum points for each question are as outlined in the following Evaluation Table:

i. Evaluation Table

Section Title	Weight	Max Points
Question 1	1	10
Question 2	1	10
Question 3	1	10
Question 4	1	10
Question 5	0.5	10
Question 6	0.5	5
Question 7	0.5	5
Question 8	0.5	5
Question 9	0.5	5
Question 10	0.5	5
Written Proposal Maximum Points		75

D. Scoring Rubric for Written Proposal

Evaluators will score the sections outlined in the Evaluation Table above using the following (0-10) scoring rubric:

i. Scoring Rubric

Score	Description	Scoring Criteria
10	Far Exceeds Requirements	The Bidder has provided an innovative, detailed, and thorough response to the requirement, and clearly demonstrates a high level of experience with, or understanding of the requirement.
7	Exceeds Requirements	The Bidder has demonstrated an above-average capability, approach, or solution and has provided a complete description of the capability, approach, or solution.
5	Meets Requirements	The Bidder has an acceptable capability of solution to meet this criterion and has described its approach in sufficient detail to be considered "as substantially meeting the requirements".
3	Below Requirements	The Bidder has established some capability to perform the requirement but descriptions regarding their approach are not sufficient to demonstrate the Bidder will be fully able to meet the requirements.
1	Substantially Below Requirements	The Bidder has not established the capability to perform the requirement, has marginally described its approach, or has simply restated the requirement.
0	No Value	The Bidder does not address any component of the requirement, or no information was provided.

E. Cost Proposal - Exhibit B, Section F – 15 POINTS MAX

Points for Cost Proposal will be computed according to the formula below based on a maximum of 15 Cost Proposal points. Any point calculations that result in decimal points will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Proposals in excess of **\$235,000** will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated.

$\frac{\text{Lowest Cost Proposal}}{\text{Bidder's Cost Proposal}}$	x	Max Cost Proposal Points (15 Points)	=	Bidder's Cost Proposal Score
---	---	---	---	------------------------------

F. Maximum Possible Proposal Points

i. Evaluation Table – All Scored Items – See Exhibit B, *Bidder Proposal Packet*

Exhibit Section	Title	Max Points
Section C	Executive Order 18-03	5
Section E	WA Small and/or Certified Veteran Owned Businesses	20
Section F	Written Proposal	75
Section G	Cost Proposal	15
Total Maximum Points		115

4.3 BEST AND FINAL OFFER (BAFO)

HCA reserves the right to use a Best and Final Offer (BAFO) before awarding any contract to further assist in determining the ASB(s).

4.4 SUBSTANTIALLY EQUIVALENT SCORES

Substantially Equivalent Scores are scores separated by two percent or less in total points. If multiple Proposals receive a Substantially Equivalent Score, HCA may leave the matter as scored or select as the ASB the one Proposal that is deemed by HCA, in its sole discretion, to be in HCA's best interest relative to the overall purpose and objective as stated in Section 1.3, *Purpose and Objectives*, of this RFP.

If applicable, HCA's best interest will be determined by HCA staff, who have sole discretion over this determination. The basis for such determination will be communicated in writing to all Bidders with Substantially Equivalent Scores.

4.5 NOTIFICATION TO BIDDERS

HCA will announce the ASB to all Bidders via the WEBS notification system.

4.6 DEBRIEFING OF UNSUCCESSFUL BIDDERS

Any Bidder who has submitted a Proposal and been notified it was not selected for contract award may request a debriefing conference. The request for a debriefing conference must be received by the RFP Coordinator no later than 5:00 PM, Pacific Time, within three (3) Business Days after the Unsuccessful Bidder Notification is emailed to the Bidder. The debriefing will be held within three (3) Business Days of the request, or as schedules allow.

Discussion at the debriefing conference will be limited to the following:

- A. Evaluation and scoring of the Bidder's Proposal;
- B. Critique of the Proposal based on the evaluation; and
- C. Review of the Bidder's final score in comparison with other final scores without identifying the other Bidders.

Topics a Bidder could have raised as part of the *Complaint Process* (Section 2.9) cannot be discussed as part of the debriefing conference, even if the Bidder did not submit a complaint.

Comparisons between Proposals, or evaluations of the other Proposals will not be allowed. Debriefing conferences may be conducted virtually and will be scheduled for a maximum of thirty (30) minutes.

4.7 PROTEST PROCEDURE

A protest may be made only by Bidders who submitted a response to this RFP and who have participated in a debriefing conference. Upon completing the debriefing conference, the Bidder is allowed five (5) Business Days to file a protest. Protests must be received by the Contracts Administrator no later than 4:30 PM, Pacific Time, on the fifth (5th) Business Day following the Bidder's debriefing. Protests must be submitted by email to ensure timely receipt.

Consistent with RCW 39.26.030, Proposal submissions and Proposal evaluations will be available for public inspection following the announcement of ASB(s). If requested by a Bidder who received a debriefing pursuant to Section 4.6, *Debriefing of Unsuccessful Bidders*, the protest period will not conclude before the requestor has been provided with the applicable Proposal submissions and Proposal evaluations and provided five (5) Business Days to review the same. Bidder is responsible for notifying the RFP Coordinator of any such public disclosure requests so the timeline can be adjusted accordingly.

Bidders protesting this RFP must follow the procedures described below. Protests that do not follow these procedures will not be considered. This protest procedure constitutes the sole administrative remedy available to Bidders under this RFP.

- A. All protests must be in writing, addressed to the Contracts Administrator, and signed by the protesting party or an authorized agent. The protest must state (1) the RFP number, (2) the grounds for the protest with specific facts, (3) complete statements of the action(s) being protested, and (4) the relief or corrective action being requested. Protests must be emailed to contracts@hca.wa.gov with the following subject line:

“RFP #2026HCA15 Protest – [BIDDER NAME]”

- B. Only protests alleging an issue of fact concerning the following subjects will be considered:
 - i. A matter of bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator;
 - ii. Errors in computing the score; or
 - iii. Non-compliance with procedures described in the RFP, HCA’s protest process, or Department of Enterprise Services (DES) policy requirements (POL-DES-170-00).

Protests based on anything other than those items listed above will not be considered. Protests will be rejected as without merit to the extent they address issues such as: 1) an evaluator’s professional judgment on the quality of a Proposal; or 2) HCA’s assessment of its own needs or requirements.

- C. Upon receipt of a protest, HCA will undertake a protest review. The HCA Director, or an HCA employee delegated by the HCA Director who is a neutral party with no involvement in the evaluation and award process (Protest Officer), will review and respond to the protest. If the HCA Director delegates the protest review to an HCA employee, the Director nonetheless reserves the right to make the final agency decision on the protest. The Protest Officer will have the right to seek additional information regarding the solicitation from sources they deem appropriate in order to fully consider the protest.
- D. If HCA determines in its sole discretion that a protest from one Bidder may affect the interests of another Bidder, then HCA may invite such Bidder to submit its views and any relevant information on the protest to the Protest Officer. In such a situation, the protest materials submitted by each Bidder will be made available to all other Bidders upon request.
- E. The Protest Officer will issue a written protest response no more than ten (10) Business Days after receipt of the protest, unless additional time is needed, in which case HCA will notify the protesting Bidder in writing. The Protest Officer’s decision is final unless the HCA Director exercises their right to make the final agency decision on the protest. There will be no appeal process.
- F. The final determination of the protest will:
 - i. Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold HCA’s action; or

- ii. Find only technical or harmless errors in HCA's acquisition process and determine HCA to be in substantial compliance and reject the protest; or
- iii. Find merit in the protest and provide options to the HCA Director, which may include:
 - 1) Correct the errors and re-evaluate all Proposals; or
 - 2) Issue a new solicitation document and begin a new process; or
 - 3) Make other findings and determine other courses of action as appropriate.

If the protest is not successful, HCA will enter into a contract with the ASB(s), assuming the parties reach agreement on the contract's terms.

5. RFP EXHIBITS

ALL EXHIBITS ARE PROVIDED SEPARATELY

EXHIBIT A: Interested Subcontractor Form

EXHIBIT B: Bidder Proposal Packet

- A. Bidder Profile and Submittal Form - MANDATORY
- B. Diverse Business Inclusion Plan - MANDATORY
- C. Executive Order 18-03 - Worker's Rights - MANDATORY/SCORED
- D. WA Small and/or Certified Veteran Owned Business Certification - MANDATORY/SCORED
- E. Written Proposal - MANDATORY/SCORED
- F. Cost Proposal - MANDATORY/SCORED

EXHIBIT C: Draft Contract