

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consulting Services

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Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

## REPRODUCTION COPY

Total number of pages: 56

Number of redacted pages: Attachments A (10 pages) and F (18 pages)

July 22, 2025

Tara Leweling  
Founder & CEO  
Sage 71 LLC

737 Eardley Ave  
Pacific Grove, CA 93950

+1-831-869-0486  
[hello@sage71.com](mailto:hello@sage71.com)





737 Eardley Ave  
Pacific Grove, CA 93950

June 30, 2025

California Public Employees' Retirement System  
P.O. Box 942702  
Sacramento, CA 94229-2702

CalPERS Contracts Office  
400 Q Street, Room 2220  
Sacramento, CA 95811

Re: Response to RFP No. 2024-9420 – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy Support Services

Dear CalPERS Evaluation Team:

On behalf of Sage 71 LLC, I am pleased to submit our response to RFP No. 2024-9420. I serve as the company's Founder and CEO and am authorized to bind Sage 71 LLC contractually.

This proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer valid for 180 days from the date of submission. We are committed to performing the services described in the RFP and supporting CalPERS in advancing a DEI strategy that is both ambitious and compliant, grounded in organizational reality, and aligned with stakeholder priorities.

We bring deep experience in private- and public-sector strategy, stakeholder alignment, and implementation under legal and fiduciary constraints—precisely the capabilities CalPERS seeks for this engagement. As a certified Service-Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) and certified Small Business (Micro), Sage 71 LLC offers CalPERS a trusted and mission-aligned partner. Prior to establishing Sage 71 LLC, I led enterprise-wide DEI and sustainability initiatives at USAA and Allstate, organizations with more than \$100B and \$90B in assets under management, respectively. I have also advised and served on private sector and non-profit boards navigating governance, culture, and stakeholder trust. Our team understands the nuances of Proposition 209 and brings a systems-oriented, strategy-focused approach to DEI implementation, cultural change, and board-level engagement. We are known for navigating divergent perspectives with discretion, building trust across constituencies, and delivering actionable, credible, and durable strategies.

As a California-based firm with a considered understanding of the state's legal and cultural context, Sage 71 LLC understands the visibility and responsibility that come with leading on DEI in the public sector. We approach this work not as a reset, but as an opportunity to build on CalPERS' existing DEI strategy—aligning ambition with implementation, values with compliance, and CalPERS' DEI pillars with CalPERS' strategic plan and objectives. Sage 71 LLC blends enterprise strategy expertise with trust-centered facilitation and board-savvy delivery, ensuring that our recommendations are practical, evidence-based, appropriately ambitious, and tailored to CalPERS' fiduciary duties and long-term strategic objectives.

Please note that while Sage 71 LLC brings extensive experience in strategy, governance, and DEI implementation, **we do not provide legal advice**. All legal interpretation, including compliance with Proposition 209 and other applicable laws, would remain the responsibility of CalPERS and its legal counsel, consistent with the RFP.

We are ready and available to begin work and deploy the resources necessary to meet the scope, pace, and quality standards set forth in this RFP. We appreciate your consideration and would be honored to support this important effort.

Sincerely,

Tara A. Leweling, Ph.D.

Founder & CEO | Sage 71 LLC | tara@sage71.com | (831) 869-0486



**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Minimum Qualifications Certification**

As prescribed in the Minimum Qualifications, Section IV, of the Request for Proposal (RFP), all Proposers are required to sign and return this Attachment, along with written evidence of how each qualification is met on Attachment A, Exhibit 1, Evidence of Minimum Qualifications. The undersigned hereby certifies that the firm submitting this response fulfills the minimum qualifications outlined below, as well as the requirements contained in the RFP.

**Minimum Qualifications include:**

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.
- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.
- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.
- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least one (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.
- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

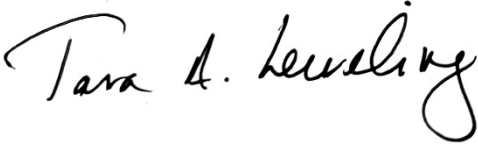
California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment A

Page 2 of 2

**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**



June 30, 2025

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Authorized Signature

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Date

Sage 71 LLC

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Name of Firm

Tara A. Leweling, Founder & CEO

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Name and Title (Please Print)





## PROPOSAL/PROPOSER CERTIFICATION SHEET

### 1. Designation of Official Contact Person

The individual to whom all information and correspondence regarding this RFP should be transmitted is:

Firm Name: Sage 71 LLC

Contact Name and Title: Tara Leweling | Founder & CEO

Address: 737 Eardley Ave | Pacific Grove, CA | 93950

Phone Number: (831) 869-0486

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: tara@sage71.com

### 2. Indicate your organization type:

☒ Limited Liability Company

☐ Partnership

☐ Joint Venture (If checked, attach required documentation. See "Exhibit 1")

☐ Limited Liability Corporation

☐ Corporation (Corporation Number \_\_\_\_\_)

☐ Sole Proprietorship

### 3. Federal Employer ID No. (FEIN): 99-4295452

### 4. California Corporation Number: B20250096850

### 5. Are you certified with the Department of General Services, Office of Small Business and DVBE Certification as:

a. California Small Business Yes ☒ No ☐

b. Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Yes ☒ No ☐

c. California Micro Business Yes ☒ No ☐

**NOTE:** A copy of your Certification is required to be included if either of the above items is checked "Yes"

### 6. Statement of Compliance

Proposer has, unless exempted, complied with the State of California's requirements pertaining to the development, implementation, and maintenance of the nondiscrimination program. (California Government Code section 12990 (a-f) and Title 2, California Code of Regulations, section 8103, et. seq.)

**7. Does your Proposal contain Proprietary Information?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ (If yes, attach a separate sheet to this certification which specifically itemizes the section(s) marked as "proprietary information". See "Submission of Proposals".)

**8. Reproduction Copy**

The total number of pages contained in the "Copy for Reproduction": 28 (See "Submission of Proposals".)

**9. Contract Execution Information**

If awarded a contract, the individual to whom the contract should be transmitted is:

Contact Name and Title: Tara Leweling | Founder & CEO

Address: 737 Eardley Ave | Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Phone Number: (831) 869-0486

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: tara@sage71.com

The name of the company officer authorized to sign this contract is:

Name and Title: Tara Leweling | Founder & CEO

Address: 737 Eardley Ave | Pacific Grove, CA 93950

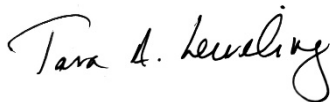
Phone Number: (831) 869-0486

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: tara@sage71.com

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**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**



---

Authorized Signature

Tara A. Leweling | Founder & CEO

---

Name and Title (Please Print)

June 30, 2025

---

Date

**Proprietary Information**

Sage 71 LLC Proprietary Information included in this proposal is:

- Attachment A, Exhibit 1, in its entirety
- Attachment F, in its entirety

Printed on: 6/29/2025 3:17:11 AM

To verify most current certification status go to: <https://www.caleprocure.ca.gov>

## Office of Small Business & DVBE Services

**Certification ID:** 2045542**Legal Business Name:**

SAGE 71 LLC

**Doing Business As (DBA) Name 1:****Doing Business As (DBA) Name 2:****Address:**

737 EARDLEY AVE

PACIFIC GROVE

CA 93950-4623

**Email Address:**

tara@sage71.com

**Business Web Page:**<https://www.linkedin.com/company/sage71/>**Business Phone Number:**

831.869.0486

**Business Fax Number:****Business Types:**

Service

| Certification Type | Status   | From       | To         |
|--------------------|----------|------------|------------|
| DVBE               | Approved | 06/26/2025 | 06/30/2027 |
| SB(Micro)          | Approved | 06/26/2025 | 06/30/2027 |

Stay informed! KEEP YOUR CERTIFICATION PROFILE UPDATED!

-LOG IN at [CaleProcure.CA.GOV](https://www.caleprocure.ca.gov)

Questions?

Email: [OSDSHELP@DGS.CA.GOV](mailto:OSDSHELP@DGS.CA.GOV)

Call OSDS Main Number: 916-375-4940

707 3rd Street, 1-400, West Sacramento, CA 95605





California Public Employees' Retirement System  
**California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration**

Firm's Name Sage 71 LLC

The firm named above certifies, that the firm is eligible to contract with the State of California and CalPERS, pursuant to the provisions of the California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act of 2003 (Public Contract Code section 10286 et. seq.).

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

Authorized Signature

June 30, 2025

Date

Tara A. Leweling, Founder & CEO

Name and Title (Please Print)



## California Public Employees' Retirement System Contracting Act Declarations

CalPERS is prohibited from contracting with individuals or firms who do business subject to the following statutes. By signing this form, you are certifying that you or your firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, a state agency.

### **Sudan Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477, a bidder or proposer who is a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ X This firm does not currently have, and has not had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, and in accordance with Public Contract Code section 10478, this firm hereby certifies it is not a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).
- ☐ This firm is a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), but has received written permission from the Department of General Services (DGS) to submit a bid or proposal pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477(b). A copy of the written permission from DGS is included with the firm's bid or proposal.
- ☐ This firm currently has, or has had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, but hereby certifies that is not a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).

### **Iran Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to the Iran Contracting Act of 2010 (Public Contract Code section 2201, et. seq.), if a bidder, at the time of the bid or proposal for a new contract, or renewal of an existing contract, has engaged<sup>1</sup> in investment activities in Iran (as described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5) is ineligible, and shall not, bid on, submit a proposal for, or enter into or renew a contract with a

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<sup>1</sup> Or such person is identified on a list created by the Department of General Services pursuant to Section 2203(b) as a person engaging in investment activities in Iran.

public entity for goods or services for one million dollars (\$1,000,000) or more. (Public Contract Code section 2203(a)).

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ X This firm, or person, hereby certifies that it (or he or she) is not identified on the DGS list created pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(b) as a firm or person engaging in "investment activities" in Iran described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5(a) or 2202.5(b).
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies it is permitted to submit a bid or proposal to a public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c) because its investment activities in Iran were (1) made before July 1, 2010, (2) were not expanded or renewed after July 1, 2010, and (3) the firm has adopted, publicized, and is implementing a formal plan to cease the investment activities in Iran and to refrain from engaging in any new investments in Iran.
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies that although it is a financial institution that extends twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) or more in credit to another person, for 45 days or more, the person who will use the credit to provide goods or services in the energy sector in Iran is a person permitted to submit a bid or proposal to the public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c). (See Public Contract Code section 2202.3(d)).

**Democratic Republic of the Congo Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10490 and section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)), a scrutinized company (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services related to products or services that are the reason the firm must comply with section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ X This is not a "scrutinized company" or does not currently use any conflict mineral products that are necessary to the functionality or production of a product manufactured by the firm from the Democratic Republic of the Congo or an "adjoining country" (see 15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)(p)), and section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (Pub.L. No.111-203, (July 21, 2010) 124 Stat. 1376)).
- ☐ This firm has ceased to be regarded as a "scrutinized company" (as defined by Cal. Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) because (1) it is not in violation of section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)(p)); or (2) it has filed an amended or corrective filing under section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which filing corrected the violations; or (3) three years have passed since the date of the final judgment or settlement entered in a civil or administrative action brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

- ☐ Disclosure requirements have been temporarily waived by the SEC because the President of the United States has transmitted a determination that the waiver or revision is in the national security interest of the United States, or the disclosure requirements have been terminated because the President has determined and certified to the appropriate congressional committees that no armed groups continue to be directly involved and benefitting from this firm's commercial activity involving conflict minerals.

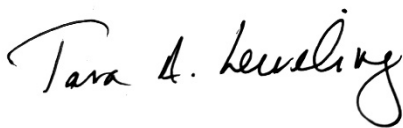
**Unruh Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 2010, a bidder or proposer who proposes to enter into or renew a contract with a state agency with respect to any contract in the amount of \$100,000 or more must certify, under penalty of perjury, at the time the bid or proposal is submitted or the contract is renewed that they are in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, and that any policy that they have against any sovereign nation or peoples recognized by the government of the United States, including, but not limited to, the nation and people of Israel, is not used to discriminate in violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act or the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- X This firm certifies that it is in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act, as defined in Public Contract Code Section 2010.

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make these declarations on behalf of the above-named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**



June 30, 2025

Authorized Signature

Date

Tara A. Leweling, Founder & CEO

Sage 71 LLC

Name and Title (Please Print)

Firm Name (Please Print)



**CalPERS Contract-Related Disclosure Form**

*(To be used if Contractor is not required to file a  
Placement Agent Information Disclosure Form (2 CCR § 559))*

**This form is to be used for all Contract-Related Disclosures, including Proposals.**

Please refer to title 2 California Code Regulations section 559.1 (b)(1) through (b)(3), prior to completing this form.

a. Solicitation or Contract Number:

2024-9420

b. Proposer or Contractor Name:

Sage 71 LLC

c. Name of Individual Authorized to bind the Proposer or Contractor:

Tara Leweling

d. Contact Person (if different than above):

Tara Leweling

e. E-mail Address:

tara@sage71.com

f. Phone No:

(831) 869-0486

g. Name of CalPERS Contact (if applicable):

Not Applicable

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment E

Page 2 of 3

Have you, your firm or your firm's principals, employees, agents, or affiliates compensated or agreed to compensate, directly or indirectly, any Agent as defined in section 559.1(a)(1) (whether or not employed by you) or any entity to act as Agent in connection with this Solicitation or Contract? (§559.1 (b)(1))

☐ Yes. ☒ No.

**If you checked Yes, please respond to questions 1 through 5 below, and sign and date the Form on the final page.**

**If you checked No, please respond to question 5 below, and sign and date this Form on the final page.**

1. Please list the names and relationships for each Agent in connection with the CalPERS Solicitation or Contract, including a description of the relationship with the Proposer or Contractor. (Add an additional page if necessary.) Please check the box to the left if the Agent is a current or former CalPERS Board Member, Staff Member, consultant, or has a Familial Relationship with any such individual.

|                          | Name | Relationship |
|--------------------------|------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | N/A  |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |

2. Please attach a copy of all contracts, agreements, or other documents memorializing the relationship between the Proposer or Contractor and the Agent. When an *entity* is retained as an Agent, please also include the requested information for any officer, director, or employee actively providing Agent services with regard to CalPERS or receiving more than 15% of the Agent fees.

N/A

3. Provide a description of any financial or Familial Relationship(s) between the Agent and a Board Member or Staff Member, including the names of the Board Member(s) and/or Staff Members:

N/A

PERS01A0068

(5/2012)

4. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Agent to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.

N/A

5. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Proposer or Contractor to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.

None

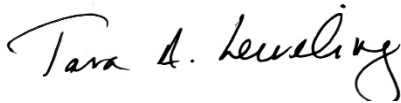
By executing this form the undersigned represents and warrants the information set forth herein is true and correct. The undersigned agrees to update this information within 14 calendar days of the date Proposer or Contractor knows or reasonably should have known of any defect or changes to this information.

The Contract-Related Disclosure Form and attachments shall be a public record subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act. No confidentiality restrictions shall be placed on information submitted by the Proposer or Contractor.

The undersigned represents and agrees it shall make a representation and warranty as to the continuing accuracy of this information in any final written agreement between it and CalPERS.

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I, the official named below, acknowledge and declare I have read and understand CCR section 559.1, and that the above-named firm has provided information required by section 559.1 and this Form. I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above-named firm, and declare the foregoing is true and correct as of the date of execution of this document. I further acknowledge my firm's responsibility to provide updates in the event this information is determined to be incorrect or has changed.



Authorized Signature

June 30, 2025

Date

Tara A. Leweling, Founder & CEO

Name and Title





## DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

CalPERS Board of Administration requires contract participation from certified Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs) in its contract process, unless specifically exempted. Only State of California, Office of Small Business and DVBE Services (OSDS) may certify a DVBE. The DVBE must perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation to be considered compliant with the DVBE program requirements. In order to obtain DVBE incentive participation credit, the contractor must be a certified DVBE **or** subcontract with a DVBE, certified by OSDS, **no later than** the Final Filing Date as specified in the Schedule of Events.

**Please read the following requirements carefully. Completion of this document is required regardless of intent to pursue DVBE incentive participation.**

### I. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this DVBE incentive participation, the following definitions apply:

- A. **Disabled veteran** means a veteran of the military, naval, or air services of the United States with a **service-connected disability of ten percent or more**, who is a resident of the State of California.
- B. **DVBE** means a business concern certified by OSDS as meeting all of the following:
  - 1. A sole proprietorship at least 51 percent owned by one or more disabled veterans; or in the case of a publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of its stock is owned by one or more disabled veterans; a subsidiary which is wholly owned by a parent corporation, but only if at least 51 percent of the voting stock of the parent corporation is owned by one or more disabled veterans; or a joint venture in which at least 51 percent of the joint venture's management and control and earnings are held by one or more disabled veterans.
  - 2. The management and control of the daily business operations are by one or more disabled veterans. The disabled veterans who exercise management and control are not required to be the same disabled veterans as the owners of the business concern.
  - 3. It is a sole proprietorship, corporation, or partnership with its home office located in the United States, which is not a branch or subsidiary of a foreign corporation, foreign firm, or other foreign based business.

**Note:** View certification information at <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/PD/About/Page-Content/PD-Branch-Intro-Accordion-List/OSDS/OSDS> or contact the OSDS at (916) 375-4940.

**C. *Commercially Useful Function*** A DVBE contractor, subcontractors, or supplier is considered performing a commercially useful function when it meets all of the following criteria:

1. The business concern is:
  - (a) Responsible for the execution of a distinct element of the work of the contract;
  - (b) Carries out its obligation by actually performing, managing, or supervising the work involved;
  - (c) Performs work that is normal for its business, services and function; and
2. The business concern is not further subcontracting a greater portion of the work that is greater than would be expected by normal industry practices.

A contractor, subcontractor, or supplier will not be considered to perform a commercially useful function if the contractor's, subcontractor's, or supplier's role is limited to that of an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of small business, microbusiness, or DVBE participation. When subcontracting to small, micro, or DVBE subcontractors, the intent is for the subcontractor to provide goods or services required for the performance of the contract rather than artificial or incidental participation that provides an "appearance" of participation to meet the socio-economic objectives of these programs.

**II. DVBE PARTICIPATION OPTIONS AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be **responsive** to the incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation and select one of the following options:

- A. Option A - DVBE Incentive.** A bidder may submit DVBE participation percentages to receive and qualify for the incentive program. Bids that fail to submit the required form and confirm the level of DVBE participation will not be eligible to receive the DVBE incentive. **Refer to RFP, Section V Proposal Requirements, A(8) Technical Proposal/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation and Incentive.**
- B. Option B - No DVBE Incentive Participation.** A bidder may opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

### **USE/SUBSTITUTION OF PROPOSED DVBE**

If awarded the contract, the successful bidder must use the DVBE subcontractor and/or supplier proposed in their final bid/proposal unless the contractor requests substitution via prior written notice to CalPERS and CalPERS approves such substitution. At a minimum, the request must include:

- A. A written explanation for the substitution;
- B. The identity of the person or firm substituted;
- C. Any change in the work or dollar/percentage amount caused by the substitution; and
- D. A revised DVBE Contract Participation (Attachment G, Exhibit 1) and applicable certification(s).

The request and CalPERS approval or disapproval of the substitution shall not affect compliance with any other provision of law, or any other contract requirements relating to substitution of subcontractors.

### **III. QUESTIONS**

The information below is provided to answer commonly asked questions and clarify potential misconceptions of the contract participation goal requirement. If further clarification is necessary, you may contact CalPERS Contracts Officer at (916) 795-3020 or [oscd\\_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov](mailto:oscd_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov) for assistance.

#### **Meeting the Goal**

- 1. Proposing incentive goal attainment is a commitment to use disabled veteran business enterprises for the established percent of the contract amount. If awarded a contract, CalPERS expects the DVBE subcontractors or suppliers to be utilized as identified in your proposal, unless a substitution is approved by CalPERS.
- 2. An expression of intent to subcontract with unidentified DVBE firms at some future date is insufficient to comply with DVBE incentive participation. Commitments must be finalized upon submission of your contract participation documentation to CalPERS.
- 3. **Out-of-state firms** are not excluded from participating in the DVBE incentive program. To do business with CalPERS, completion of this document is required for all bidders.



## DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

In order to be responsive to incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation. Check the appropriate box to indicate the option with which you choose to comply. Please read all instructions carefully prior to completing this form. **Only California certified DVBEs who perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation may be used to satisfy the DVBE program requirements.**

This solicitation does **not** have a DVBE participation requirement; however, you may still commit to an incentive percentage to obtain preference points.

X **Option A** - I commit to the percent listed below to qualify for the DVBE incentive program.

☐ 1% - 1.99%

☐ 2% - 2.99%

☐ 3% - 3.99%

☐ 4% - 4.99%

X 5% or Over

☐ **Option B** - I opt out of participating in the DVBE incentive program.

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**In order to meet the DVBE participation requirement, list one or more DVBE vendors and the work to be performed.**

**DVBE Company Name:** Sage 71 LLC

**E-mail (if available):** hello@sage71.com

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (831) 869-0486

**Contact Name:** Tara Leweling

**Fax Number:** N/A

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

737 Eardley Ave | Pacific Grove, CA 93950

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

X SB   X MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

100% of Phases I to IV, including leadership interviews; program review & assessment; action plan recommendations; action plan implementation

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**DVBE Company Name:** N/A

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:** N/A

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:** N/A

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

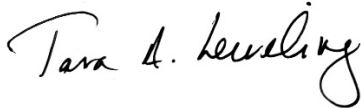
X I commit to utilizing one or more of the DVBEs listed above in order to meet the total claimed DVBE% indicated, and certify that the DVBE vendor(s) listed above have been notified and agree to provide services for this contract.

Total DVBE % 5 or more

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

June 30, 2025



---

☐ I opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

---

---



## List of Proposed Subcontractors

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this attachment. Please check the applicable box. (A photo copy of this form is acceptable if additional sheets are required.)

- ☒ No subcontractors will be used.
- ☐ No subcontractors will be used other than the DVBE firms identified on Attachment G, Exhibit 1.
- ☐ The following subcontractors will be employed and will perform the work or services identified below.
- ☐ Non-small business preference to be applied by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.

---

Company Name: N/A

Contact Name:

Telephone Number:

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:

---

Company Name: N/A

Contact Name:

Telephone Number:

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:

---

<sup>1</sup> If your firm is claiming the non-small business preference by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.



## Required Attachments Certification Checklist

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services

### Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Firm's Name: Sage 71 LLC

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this Attachment. Complete the "Proposer Certification" column and submit this checklist to confirm the items submitted with your Proposal. CalPERS staff will use the shaded "CalPERS Verification" column to confirm receipt of all required documents.

| Attachment Name/Description                                                                                                                                                             | Proposer Certification               | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted Cover Letter signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                                                           | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| a. A statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer good for 180 calendar days.                                                                              |                                      |                                                             |
| b. A statement expressing the Proposer's willingness to perform the services as described in this RFP.                                                                                  |                                      |                                                             |
| c. A statement expressing the Proposer's availability of staff and other required resources for performing all services and providing all deliverables as described in the RFP.         |                                      |                                                             |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment of Proposal packages as specified in the RFP.                                                                                                          | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF marked " <b>Master Copy</b> " containing original signatures.                                                                                                     | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment marked " <b>Reproduction Copy.</b> " All pages containing proprietary information should be removed and a cover sheet must be included which provides: | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1. the firm's names;                                                                                                                                                                    |                                      |                                                             |
| 2. total number of pages; and                                                                                                                                                           |                                      |                                                             |
| 3. identification of all pages removed due to proprietary information.                                                                                                                  |                                      |                                                             |
| <b>Note: Entire proposal may not be marked confidential and proprietary.</b>                                                                                                            |                                      |                                                             |
| Submitted Minimum Qualifications Certification (Attachment A) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                    | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Proposal/Proposer Certification Sheet (Attachment B) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                   | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Small Business certified?                                                                                                                                                               | X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No    |                                                             |
| DVBE certified?                                                                                                                                                                         | X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No    |                                                             |
| Micro Business certified?                                                                                                                                                               | X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No    |                                                             |



California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment I

Page 2 of 3

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                      |                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration (Attachment C) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contracting Act Declarations (Attachment D) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contract-Related Disclosure Form (Attachment E) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Proposal Questionnaire (Attachment F)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation (Attachment G, including Exhibit 1)</p> <p>Option A - Meets DVBE Participation? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/>5 or more% Claimed</p> <p>Option B - DVBE Incentive Claimed? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/>5 or more% Claimed</p> <p>Option C – Elected no DVBE participation? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Option D – California Certified Micro Business? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>List of Proposed Subcontractors (Attachment H) X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes X No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | X Yes<br>X No                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Required Attachments Certification Checklist (Attachment I)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Joint Venture proposal?</p> <p>If yes, was documentation submitted describing the responsibilities of each party in the Joint Venture, Exhibit 1? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br>X No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Preference Program request?</p> <p>Small Business Preference claimed? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes X No</p> <p>Target Area Contract Preference Act claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes X No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                          | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Is the Corporation registered and in good standing to do business? X Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Submit current copy of a Secretary of State Certification or Business License</p> <p>(Check the California Secretary of State website at <a href="https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business">https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business</a> to verify status)</p> <p>Is the company an LLP? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes X No</p>                              | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted the Fee Proposal (Attachment J) in a separate document in the Proposal package email. Fee Proposal clearly labeled as "FEE PROPOSAL FOR RFP NO. 2024-9375, submitted by [YOUR COMPANY NAME]."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | X Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

| Verifications Performed by CalPERS Staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Has Contractor been decertified by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing?</p> <p>(Check the California Regulatory Notice Register at <a href="https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/">https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/</a>)</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment I

Page 3 of 3

Comments:

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Signature of CalPERS Reviewer

---

Date



BA20250880910

B3647-4075 04/30/2025 3:20 PM Received by California Secretary of State



**STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
*Office of the Secretary of State*  
**STATEMENT OF INFORMATION**  
**LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY**

California Secretary of State  
1500 11th Street  
Sacramento, California 95814  
(916) 657-5448

For Office Use Only

**-FILED-**

File No.: BA20250880910

Date Filed: 4/30/2025

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Entity Details                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                   |
| Limited Liability Company Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Sage 71 LLC                                                                                       |
| Entity No.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | B20250096850                                                                                      |
| Formed In                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | DELAWARE                                                                                          |
| Street Address of Principal Office of LLC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                   |
| Principal Address                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 8 THE GREEN<br>STE B<br>DOVER, DE 19901                                                           |
| Mailing Address of LLC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                   |
| Mailing Address                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 8 THE GREEN<br>STE B<br>DOVER, DE 19901                                                           |
| Attention                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                   |
| Street Address of California Office of LLC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                   |
| Street Address of California Office                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 2108 N ST<br>STE N<br>SACRAMENTO, CA 95816                                                        |
| Manager(s) or Member(s)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                   |
| Manager or Member Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Manager or Member Address                                                                         |
| + Tara Leweling                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2108 N ST<br>STE N<br>SACRAMENTO, CA 95816                                                        |
| Agent for Service of Process                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                   |
| California Registered Corporate Agent (1505)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | NORTHWEST REGISTERED AGENT, INC.<br>Registered Corporate 1505 Agent                               |
| Type of Business                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                   |
| Type of Business                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Any lawful purpose                                                                                |
| Email Notifications                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                   |
| Opt-in Email Notifications                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | No, I do NOT want to receive entity notifications via email. I prefer notifications by USPS mail. |
| Chief Executive Officer (CEO)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                   |
| CEO Name                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | CEO Address                                                                                       |
| None Entered                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                   |
| Labor Judgment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                   |
| No Manager or Member, as further defined by California Corporations Code section 17702.09(a)(8), has an outstanding final judgment issued by the Division of Labor Standards Enforcement or a court of law, for which no appeal is pending, for the violation of any wage order or provision of the Labor Code. |                                                                                                   |

Electronic Signature

☒ By signing, I affirm under penalty of perjury that the information herein is true and correct and that I am authorized by California law to sign.

*Nat Smith*

Signature

*04/30/2025*

Date



Sage 71

Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420

**SAMPSON DEARBORN CONSULTING**

**Total number of pages: 46**

**Response to RFP No. 2024-9420**

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**

**REPRODUCTION COPY**

**(Excludes Attachment J - Proposed Fees)**

**Cover Letter**

Perika Sampson  
Founder and Principal  
Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
3740 Mullen Pl  
View Park, CA 90043  
P: 310-431-1451  
E: [perika@sampsondearborn.com](mailto:perika@sampsondearborn.com)

July 22, 2025

**Contracts Officer**  
**California Public Employees Retirement System**  
**Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420**  
E: [ossd\\_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov](mailto:ossd_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov)

Re: Response to RFP No. 2024-9420 – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services

Dear Procurement Officer,

On behalf of Sampson Dearborn Consulting, I am pleased to submit our response to RFP No. 2024-9420 for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Consulting Services. As Founder and Principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting, I am fully authorized to respond to and submit this proposal, as well as to bind the firm contractually in all matters related to this procurement.

Sampson Dearborn Consulting affirms its willingness to perform the services as outlined in the RFP and confirms that this proposal constitutes a firm and irrevocable offer for a period of 180 days from the submission date.

We are confident in our ability to deliver the services and meet all deliverables detailed in the RFP. Our firm has the required expertise, personnel, and resources available to begin work immediately and ensure timely, high-quality execution aligned with your goals and expectations.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to CalPERS' commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. We look forward to the possibility of working together and welcome the opportunity to discuss our qualifications further.

Sincerely,

Perika Sampson  
Founder and Principal  
Sampson Dearborn Consulting

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS CERTIFICATION**  
California Public Employees' Retirement System  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services

As prescribed in the Minimum Qualifications, Section IV, of the Request for Proposal (RFP), all Proposers are required to sign and return this Attachment, along with written evidence of how each qualification is met on Attachment A, Exhibit 1, Evidence of Minimum Qualifications. The undersigned hereby certifies that the firm submitting this response fulfills the minimum qualifications outlined below, as well as the requirements contained in the RFP.

**Minimum Qualifications include:**

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.

**Sampson Dearborn Consulting has been actively operating for 1 year and 9 months, with official registration in the State of California completed in September 2023.**

- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.

**The founder and principal consultant of Sampson Dearborn Consulting brings nearly 20 years of deep expertise in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), including over a decade as a trusted DEI consultant. Her work spans organizational assessments, strategic planning, inclusive leadership training, and advising on DEI best practices tailored to client needs.**

**She has successfully led consulting engagements across a wide range of industries and organizations, from Fortune 500 companies to mission-driven nonprofits. Her experience includes delivering impactful DEI training through the National Diversity Council, corporate partnerships, and as a managing consultant for Diversity Best Practices.**

**As a corporate DEI executive, she has designed and implemented strategies to fulfill court-mandated diversity requirements and led the development of a global DEI strategy for a leading biotech and pharmaceutical company, demonstrating her ability to translate vision into action and impact at scale.**

**The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting has been nationally recognized as one of the Top 100 Diversity Leaders multiple times for her leadership and impact in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion. Her accolades include being named a 2023 Woman of Distinction by Medical Marketing & Media (MM+M)**



**and receiving the 2022 Moves Diversity Leader and Mentor Award from NY Moves Magazine.**

**In 2022, she was also honored as part of the Social Impact Team of the Year by the Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals (ACCP) Purpose Awards, recognizing her contributions alongside a health equity leader and corporate foundation while serving as Global Head of Diversity for a leading biotech organization.**

**She also served on the Mayor's Corporate Taskforce on Race & Equity, City of Los Angeles, under Mayor Eric Garcetti from 2020 through 2021.**

**During her tenure as diversity officer in financial services, she served as Committee Chair of the Financial Services Pipeline Initiative cross-sector collaboration led by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, the Chicago Community Trust, and more than two dozen financial institutions, where she helped shape industry-wide strategies to build inclusive talent pipelines.**

**She has been recognized for her leadership in expanding access to essential financial education for emerging professionals. Her efforts include sponsoring Series 7 prep courses and launching the Barron's in Education program at nearly 20 universities nationwide, including over a dozen Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), empowering the next generation of diverse financial leaders.**

- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.

**The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting brings over 20 years of experience providing strategic DEI consultation to nonprofit organizations and private sector companies across multiple industries. Her areas of expertise include diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy, talent management, client and consumer engagement, and inclusive marketing.**

**In her corporate roles, she has advised both internal investment advisors and external investment committees overseeing portfolios of up to \$100 million, embedding DEI principles into investment decision-making and governance. She has also provided counsel on health equity and diversity in clinical trials, ensuring that policies, processes, and access frameworks aligned with industry and government standards.**

**Earlier in her career, she served as a relationship manager for public retirement systems, with a focus on equity portfolios managed by two California-based asset**

**management firms, laying the foundation for her deep understanding of inclusive finance and institutional stakeholder engagement.**

- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least one (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.

**As Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion (2021–2023) for a global biotech company, the founder and principal was responsible for advising and providing quarterly updates to the CEO, CHRO, and the corporate board on DEI strategy, metrics, and DEI progress. while also serving on the firm’s ESG and Corporate Social Responsibility committees.**

**Previously, at Morgan Stanley (2014-2021), she partnered with the firm’s Graystone Consulting team to deliver DEI guidance, insights, and strategic updates to the board of directors of several of their nonprofit foundation clients, helping to align investment practices with the organization’s DEI goals. Notable examples include:**

- **A private, national foundation based in Baltimore with over \$3.4 billion in assets**
- **A regional community foundation based in Washington, DC, with over \$464 million in assets**

**She also served as a DEI advisor to the Graystone Consulting team, supporting DEI-related strategy and engagement for both existing and prospective institutional clients.**

- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

**Since launching, Sampson Dearborn Consulting has partnered with clients such as Seramount (2025), a leading talent solutions and workplace inclusion organization, and Ionis Pharmaceuticals (2024), a pioneering biotech company specializing in RNA- and DNA-targeted therapies.**

**In addition to her consulting work, the founder/principal has been a featured speaker on diversity, equity, and inclusion at high-profile platforms, including the Los Angeles Times, Black Enterprise, and the Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association (HBA), amplifying her voice as a trusted thought leader in the DEI space.**

**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**

*Perika J. Sampson*

Authorized Signature

**Sampson Dearborn Consulting**

Name of Firm

**Perika J. Sampson, Founder/Principal**

Name and Title (Please Print)

**June 30, 2025**

Date

**Attachment A, Exhibit 1- Evidence of Minimum Qualifications**

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.

| Organization Name           | Years of Operation  |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Sampson Dearborn Consulting | 1 year and 9 months |

- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.

| Firm                                         | Years of Experience | Type                          | Contact Person | Contact Information                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sampson Dearborn Consulting (2023 – Present) | 1.9 years           | Founder/ Principal            | Perika Sampson | <a href="mailto:perika@sampsondearborn.com">perika@sampsondearborn.com</a> |
| Corporate Roles (2014 – 2023)                | 9 years             | Corporate DEI Officer         | Perika Sampson | <a href="mailto:perika@sampsondearborn.com">perika@sampsondearborn.com</a> |
| Dearborn Consulting Partners (2007 – 2014)   | 7 years             | Founder/ Principal Consultant | Perika Sampson | <a href="mailto:perika@sampsondearborn.com">perika@sampsondearborn.com</a> |

- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.

| Firm                                        | Years of Experience | Type                 | Contact Person                      | Contact Information                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chicago United (2006-2013)                  | 7 years             | Principal Consultant | Gloria Castillo (CEO-retired)       | <a href="mailto:gloria@castillospeaks.com">gloria@castillospeaks.com</a>         |
| Diversity Best Practices (DBP) (2010 -2012) | 2 years             | Managing Consultant  | LaQuanda Murray (Formerly with DBP) | <a href="mailto:Laquanda.murray@seramount.com">Laquanda.murray@seramount.com</a> |

PERS01A0068

(5/2012)

**Attachment A, Exhibit 1- Evidence of Minimum Qualifications**

- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least once (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.

| Firm             | Years of Experience | Type       | Contact Person                                 | Contact Information                                                          |
|------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Oakland Symphony | 2021 – 2024         | Non-profit | Dr. Mieko Hatano,<br><i>Executive Director</i> | <a href="mailto:mhatano@oaklandsymphony.org">mhatano@oaklandsymphony.org</a> |

**As Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion (2021–2023) for a global biotech company, the founder and principal was responsible for advising and providing quarterly updates to the CEO, CHRO, and the corporate board on DEI strategy, metrics, and DEI progress. while also serving on the firm’s ESG and Corporate Social Responsibility committees.**

**Previously, at Morgan Stanley (2014-2021), she partnered with the firm’s Graystone Consulting team to deliver DEI guidance, insights, and strategic updates to the board of directors of several of their nonprofit foundation clients, helping to align investment practices with the organization’s DEI goals. Notable examples include:**

- A private, national foundation based in Baltimore with over \$3.4 billion in assets**
- A regional community foundation based in Washington, DC, with over \$464 million in assets**

**She also served as a DEI advisor to the Graystone Consulting team, supporting DEI-related strategy and engagement for both existing and prospective institutional clients.**

Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420

- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

| Firm                  | Years of Experience | Type                        | Contact Person                         | Contact Information                                                              |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Seramount             | 2025                | Executive Coach and Speaker | LaQuanda Murray (Relationship Manager) | <a href="mailto:Laquanda.murray@seramount.com">Laquanda.murray@seramount.com</a> |
| Ionis Pharmaceuticals | 2024                | Managing Consultant         | Karen Horning, Executive Director, HR  | <a href="mailto:Khorning@ionisph.com">Khorning@ionisph.com</a>                   |

Since launching, Sampson Dearborn Consulting has partnered with clients such as Seramount (2025), a leading talent solutions and workplace inclusion organization, and Ionis Pharmaceuticals (2024), a pioneering biotech company specializing in RNA- and DNA-targeted therapies.

**EXHIBIT B**

**PROPOSAL/PROPOSER CERTIFICATION SHEET**

**Designation of Official Contact Person**

The individual to whom all information and correspondence regarding this RFP should be transmitted is:

Firm Name: Sampson Dearborn Consulting

Contact Name and Title: Perika J. Sampson, Founder/Principal

Address: 3740 Mullen Pl., View Park, CA 90043

Phone Number: 310-431-1451

Fax Number: n/a

E-Mail Address: perika@sampsondearborn.com

**Indicate your organization type:**

**X Limited Liability Company**

☐ Partnership

☐ Joint Venture (If checked, attach required documentation. **See "Exhibit 1"**)

☐ Limited Liability Corporation

☐ Corporation (Corporation Number \_\_\_\_\_)

☐ Sole Proprietorship

**Federal Employer ID No. (FEIN):** 99-2370497

California Corporation Number: **202359115073**

**Are you certified with the Department of General Services, Office of Small Business and DVBE Certification as:**

- |                                         |                              |             |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------|
| a. California Small Business            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>No x</b> |
| b. Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>No x</b> |
| c. California Micro Business            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>No x</b> |

**NOTE:** A copy of your Certification is required to be included if either of the above items is checked "Yes"

**Statement of Compliance**

Proposer has, unless exempted, complied with the State of California's requirements pertaining to the development, implementation, and maintenance of the nondiscrimination program. (California Government Code section 12990 (a-f) and Title 2, California Code of Regulations, section 8103, et. seq.)

PERS01A0068

(5/2012)

**Does your Proposal contain Proprietary Information?**

Yes ☐ No ☒ (If yes, attach a separate sheet to this certification which specifically itemizes the section(s) marked as "proprietary information." See "Submission of Proposals.")

**Reproduction Copy**

The total number of pages contained in the "Copy for Reproduction": **44** (See "Submission of Proposals.")

**Contract Execution Information**

If awarded a contract, the individual to whom the contract should be transmitted is:

Contact Name and Title: **Perika J. Sampson, Founder/Principal**

Address: **3740 Mullen Pl., View Park, CA 90043**

Phone Number: **310-431-1451**

Fax Number: **n/a**

E-Mail Address: **perika@sampsondearborn.com**

The name of the company officer authorized to sign this contract is:

Name and Title: **Perika J. Sampson, Founder/Principal**

Address: **3740 Mullen Pl., View Park, CA 90043**

Phone Number: **310-431-1451**

Fax Number: **n/a**

E-Mail Address: **perika@sampsondearborn.com**

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**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**

**Perika J. Sampson**

Authorized Signature

**June 30, 2025**

Date

**Perika J. Sampson, Principal/Founder**

Name and Title (Please Print)

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**ATTACHMENT C**

**California Public Employees' Retirement System  
California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration**

Firm's Name **Sampson Dearborn Consulting**

The firm named above certifies that the firm is eligible to contract with the State of California and CalPERS, pursuant to the provisions of the California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act of 2003 (Public Contract Code section 10286 et. seq.).

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above-named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

**Perika J. Sampson**

Authorized Signature

**Perika J. Sampson, Founder/Principal**

Name and Title (Please Print)

**June 30, 2025**

Date



**ATTACHMENT D**  
**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Contracting Act Declarations**

CalPERS is prohibited from contracting with individuals or firms who do business subject to the following statutes. By signing this form, you are certifying that you or your firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, a state agency.

**Sudan Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477, a bidder or proposer who is a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

☒ This firm does not currently have, and has not had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, and in accordance with Public Contract Code section 10478, this firm hereby certifies it is not a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).

☐ ~~This firm is a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), but has received written permission from the Department of General Services (DGS) to submit a bid or proposal pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477(b). A copy of the written permission from DGS is included with the firm's bid or proposal.~~

☐ ~~This firm currently has, or has had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, but hereby certifies that is not a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).~~

**Iran Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to the Iran Contracting Act of 2010 (Public Contract Code section 2201, et. seq.), if a bidder, at the time of the bid or proposal for a new contract, or renewal of an existing contract, has engaged<sup>1</sup> in investment activities in Iran (as described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5) is ineligible, and shall not, bid on, submit a proposal for, or enter into or renew a contract with a public

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<sup>1</sup> Or such person is identified on a list created by the Department of General Services pursuant to Section 2203(b) as a person engaging in investment activities in Iran.

entity for goods or services for one million dollars (\$1,000,000) or more. (Public Contract Code section 2203(a)).

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm, or person, hereby certifies that it (or he or she) is not identified on the DGS list created pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(b) as a firm or person engaging in "investment activities" in Iran described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5(a) or 2202.5(b).
- ☐ ~~The firm hereby certifies it is permitted to submit a bid or proposal to a public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c) because its investment activities in Iran were (1) made before July 1, 2010, (2) were not expanded or renewed after July 1, 2010, and (3) the firm has adopted, publicized, and is implementing a formal plan to cease the investment activities in Iran and to refrain from engaging in any new investments in Iran.~~
- ☐ ~~The firm hereby certifies that although it is a financial institution that extends twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) or more in credit to another person, for 45 days or more, the person who will use the credit to provide goods or services in the energy sector in Iran is a person permitted to submit a bid or proposal to the public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c). (See Public Contract Code section 2202.3(d)).~~

**Democratic Republic of the Congo Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10490 and section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)), a scrutinized company (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services related to products or services that are the reason the firm must comply with section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This is not a "scrutinized company" or does not currently use any conflict mineral products that are necessary to the functionality or production of a product manufactured by the firm from the Democratic Public of the Congo or an "adjoining country" (see 15 U.S.C.A § 78(m)(p)), and section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (Pub.L. No.111-203, (July 21, 2010) 124 Stat. 1376)).
- ☐ ~~This firm has ceased to be regarded as a "scrutinized company" (as defined by Cal. Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) because (1) it is not in violation of section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)(p)); or (2) it has filed an amended or corrective filing under section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which filing corrected the violations; or (3) three years have passed since the date of the final judgment~~

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~~or settlement entered in a civil or administrative action brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).~~

☐ ~~Disclosure requirements have been temporarily waived by the SEC because the President of the United States has transmitted a determination that the waiver or revision is in the national security interest of the United States, or the disclosure requirements have been terminated because the President has determined and certified to the appropriate congressional committees that no armed groups continue to be directly involved and benefitting from this firm's commercial activity involving conflict minerals.~~

**Unruh Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 2010, a bidder or proposer who proposes to enter into or renew a contract with a state agency with respect to any contract in the amount of \$100,000 or more must certify, under penalty of perjury, at the time the bid or proposal is submitted or the contract is renewed that they are in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, and that any policy that they have against any sovereign nation or peoples recognized by the government of the United States, including, but not limited to, the nation and people of Israel, is not used to discriminate in violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act or the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

☒ This firm certifies that it is in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act, as defined in Public Contract Code Section 2010.

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make these declarations on behalf of the above-named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

*Perika J. Sampson*

Authorized Signature

**Perika J. Sampson, Founder/Principal**

Name and Title (Please Print)

**June 30, 2025**

Date



**ATTACHMENT E**

**CalPERS Contract-Related Disclosure Form**

*(To be used if Contractor is not required to file a  
Placement Agent Information Disclosure Form (2 CCR § 559))*

**This form is to be used for all Contract-Related Disclosures, including Proposals.**

Please refer to title 2 California Code Regulations section 559.1 (b)(1) through (b)(3), prior to completing this form.

a. Solicitation or Contract Number:

2024-9420

b. Proposer or Contractor Name:

Sampson Dearborn Consulting

c. Name of Individual Authorized to bind the Proposer or Contractor:

Perika J. Sampson

d. Contact Person (if different than above):

e. E-mail Address:

perika@sampsondearborn.com

f. Phone No:

310-431-1451

g. Name of CalPERS Contact (if applicable):

n/a

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Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420

Have you, your firm or your firm's principals, employees, agents, or affiliates compensated or agreed to compensate, directly or indirectly, any Agent as defined in section 559.1(a)(1) (whether or not employed by you) or any entity to act as Agent in connection with this Solicitation or Contract? (§559.1 (b)(1))

☐ Yes. ☒ No.

**If you checked Yes, please respond to questions 1 through 5 below, and sign and date the Form on the final page.**

**If you checked No, please respond to question 5 below, and sign and date this Form on the final page.**

1. Please list the names and relationships for each Agent in connection with the CalPERS Solicitation or Contract, including a description of the relationship with the Proposer or Contractor. (Add an additional page if necessary.) Please check the box to the left if the Agent is a current or former CalPERS Board Member, Staff Member, consultant, or has a Familial Relationship with any such individual.

|                          | Name | Relationship |
|--------------------------|------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |

2. Please attach a copy of all contracts, agreements, or other documents memorializing the relationship between the Proposer or Contractor and the Agent. When an *entity* is retained as an Agent, please also include the requested information for any officer, director, or employee actively providing Agent services with regard to CalPERS or receiving more than 15% of the Agent fees.
3. Provide a description of any financial or Familial Relationship(s) between the Agent and a Board Member or Staff Member, including the names of the Board Member(s) and/or Staff Members:

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Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420

4. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Agent to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.
5. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Proposer or Contractor to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the **Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.**

**Sampson Dearborn Consulting affirms that no offers, gifts, payments, or items of value have been given or offered to any CalPERS Board Member or Staff Member at any time during the twelve (12) months preceding the RFP submission date of June 30, 2025.**

By executing this form, the undersigned represents and warrants the information set forth herein is true and correct. The undersigned agrees to update this information within 14 calendar days of the date Proposer or Contractor knows or reasonably should have known of any defect or changes to this information.

The Contract-Related Disclosure Form and attachments shall be a public record subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act. No confidentiality restrictions shall be placed on information submitted by the Proposer or Contractor.

The undersigned represents and agrees it shall make a representation and warranty as to the continuing accuracy of this information in any final written agreement between it and CalPERS.

---

I, the official named below, acknowledge and declare I have read and understand CCR section 559.1, and that the above-named firm has provided information required by section 559.1 and this Form. I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above-named firm, and declare the foregoing is true and correct as of the date of execution of this document. I further acknowledge my firm's responsibility to provide updates in the event this information is determined to be incorrect or has changed.

*Perika J. Sampson*

Authorized Signature

**Perika J. Sampson, Founder/Principal**

Name and Title (Please Print)

**June 30, 2025**

Date

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## **ATTACHMENT F**

### **California Public Employees' Retirement System Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services Proposal Questionnaire**

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to submit responses and documentation as requested on this questionnaire. The information requested must be provided in the prescribed format; all questions must be repeated in their entirety before the answers are given. Responses that deviate materially from the prescribed format may lead to the rejection of the Proposal.

Document current and planned level of compliance with Revised 508 standards for all deliverables to be provided by the successful Proposer, including any electronic content that may be posted to the CalPERS website. Proposer may document its compliance by providing (a) its policy and procedures for validating the accessibility of electronic content; (b) a narrative description of said policy and procedures; or (c) a written Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) for each Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Standards item that is to be developed, updated, configured for, and delivered to CalPERS. Any documentation provided in responding to this question should be based on the latest version of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) provided by the Industry Technology Industry Council (ITIC).

**Sampson Dearborn Consulting is fully committed to ensuring that all deliverables, including electronic content intended for publication on the CalPERS website, comply with Revised Section 508 standards. We recognize the importance of digital accessibility and the responsibility to provide inclusive and equitable access to information for all users, including individuals with disabilities.**

**We intend to meet these standards by adhering to the following practices:**

- **(a) Accessibility Policy and Validation Procedures:**  
Sampson Dearborn Consulting follows a structured review and quality assurance process for all digital content, ensuring accessibility is evaluated during development, prior to delivery, and upon final publication. We validate accessibility using industry-standard tools and, where appropriate, conduct manual reviews to ensure compliance with WCAG 2.1 AA guidelines, which underpin the Revised Section 508 standards.
- **(b) Narrative Description:**  
Our process includes applying accessibility best practices during document creation (e.g., structured headings, alt text for images, high contrast text, accessible tables, and meaningful hyperlink text), as well as ensuring compatibility with assistive technologies such as screen readers. We utilize accessibility checkers (e.g., Adobe Acrobat Pro, Microsoft Accessibility Checker) and review content against the latest accessibility criteria to confirm conformance.



- **(c) Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR):**  
**If required by CalPERS, Sampson Dearborn Consulting is prepared to provide Accessibility Conformance Reports (ACRs) using the latest version of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) published by the Information Technology Industry Council (ITIC) for applicable deliverables.**

**Sampson Dearborn Consulting remains committed to supporting CalPERS in maintaining an inclusive and compliant digital environment and will work collaboratively to ensure all final deliverables meet or exceed accessibility expectations.**

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The response to all questions in the aggregate must be limited to twenty (20) pages maximum. Please note if a submission with more than twenty (20) pages is received, only the first twenty (20) pages will be considered for scoring. Provide responses in the order the prompts are listed.

**A. ORGANIZATION and BACKGROUND  
(Pass/Fail)**

1. Name of your organization:

**Sampson Dearborn Consulting**

2. Location of headquarters:

**View Park, California**

3. Location and address of the branch which would provide services under this contract:

**3740 Mullen Place, View Park, CA 90043**

4. Number of years your organization has been in business:

**One year and 9 months**

5. Within the past five (5) years, have there been any significant changes in your organization's ownership, corporate officers, or principal business? If yes, please describe:

**No**

6. Mission statement or statement of your organization's principal business. Please provide a copy of incorporation documents or other public documents that describe the primary focus of your firm:

**Mission Statement:** Sampson Dearborn Consulting understands the critical role of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in driving innovation within organizations. By leveraging inclusion to drive innovation, organizations can unlock new opportunities, solve complex challenges, and stay ahead of the curve in today's rapidly changing business and political landscape. We are committed to helping organizations create and implement effective DEI strategies that foster innovation, growth, and success.

**B. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CONSULTING SERVICES CAPABILITIES  
(Pass/Fail)**

Please provide a summary of the services that your firm provided in the service categories below, in one or multiple of the following business sector(s); public, private, and/or non-profit; in which the work was performed. Clearly explain your experience in all business sector(s) for each category.

**1. Providing advisory services on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) best practices**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting brings over a decade of experience advising organizations on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) best practices. She has partnered with Fortune 500 companies, public utilities, and nonprofit organizations to design and implement DEI strategies that drive cultural transformation, strengthen workforce engagement, and align with business objectives. Advisory services include executive counsel policy analysis, program design, and integration of DEI into organizational systems and operations. Providing education and training on DEI matters to Boards of Trustees.

**2. Providing education and training on DEI matters to Boards of Trustees.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting has delivered education and training on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) to C-suite executives, senior leaders, and members of nonprofit Boards of Trustees. Her sessions are designed to deepen understanding of DEI principles, address governance-level responsibilities, and equip board members with the knowledge to lead inclusively.

**3. Conducting assessments of established DEI programs and produce reports of findings and recommendations.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting has led comprehensive assessments of established DEI programs across a range of industries. In her role as a consultant, she has evaluated organizational policies, practices, and culture through stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and data analysis. These assessments have culminated in detailed reports outlining key findings and actionable recommendations to strengthen DEI strategy, enhance accountability, and align initiatives with organizational goals.

**4. Meeting with Boards of Trustees as part of the assessment and information-gathering process.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting has engaged directly with Boards of Trustees, C-suite leaders, and senior executives as part of the DEI assessment and information-gathering process. These engagements have provided critical insights into governance practices, organizational culture, and strategic priorities, enabling the development of informed, high-impact recommendations tailored to the organization's leadership and mission.

**5. Meeting with executive leadership as part of the assessment and information-gathering process.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting has worked closely with executive leadership as part of the DEI assessment and information-gathering process. This includes conducting in-depth interviews and strategic discussions with senior leaders, sometimes under the direction of General Counsel, to gain critical insight into organizational priorities, challenges, and opportunities. These engagements have informed comprehensive assessments and actionable recommendations that align with executive vision and compliance objectives.

**6. Preparing an action plan aligned to organizational core values and assessment findings.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting has developed comprehensive action plans that align with organizational core values and the findings from DEI assessments. These plans translate insights into strategic, measurable steps that support culture change, enhance accountability, and advance equity across the organization. Each action plan is tailored to reflect the organization's mission, priorities, and readiness for change.

**7. Conducting DEI best practices research and provide analysis and reports.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting has conducted in-depth research on DEI best practices and delivered comprehensive analysis and reports to inform organizational strategy. Her work includes benchmarking against various industry standards, reviewing internal policies and practices, and synthesizing findings into actionable recommendations. These insights have supported clients in strengthening their DEI initiatives and aligning efforts with emerging trends and proven practices.

**8. Advising on best practices in procurement.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting, in her capacity as a consultant and former Global Head of Inclusion and Diversity, has advised on best practices in procurement with a focus on supplier diversity and equitable sourcing. Her guidance has helped organizations integrate DEI principles into procurement policies, increase engagement with diverse suppliers, and align procurement strategies with broader ESG and corporate responsibility goals.

**9. Advising on best practices in hiring.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting, in her role as a consultant and former Global Head of Inclusion and Diversity, has advised organizations on best practices in hiring and inclusive talent acquisition strategies. Her work includes guiding the development of equitable hiring processes, mitigating bias in recruitment, and implementing strategies to attract, assess, and retain diverse talent across all levels of the organization.

**10. Advising on best practices in healthcare delivery equity and accessibility.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting, in her role as Global Head of Inclusion and Diversity, has advised healthcare leaders on best practices to advance health equity, improve accessibility, and promote diversity in clinical trials. Her work has focused on integrating equity into healthcare delivery models, identifying and addressing systemic barriers, and developing strategies to ensure historically underserved populations have equitable access to care and representation in research.

**11. Advising on the inclusion of diversity best practices in the investment industry.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting, in her role as Senior Director of Inclusion and Diversity, has advised on the integration of diversity best practices within the investment industry. Her guidance spans both the employer perspective, enhancing diversity in recruitment, retention, and leadership within investment firms, and the fiduciary perspective, supporting nonprofit investment officers in aligning DEI principles with responsible investment strategies and manager selection. Her work has contributed to more inclusive decision-making and long-term, values-driven portfolio management.

**12. Advising on DEI best practices for public sector organizations that are consistent with federal and state law, including Section 31 of Article I of the California Constitution (commonly known as “Proposition 209”).**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting has not, in her capacity as a consultant, provided advisory services specifically related to DEI best practices for public sector organizations in the context of federal and state law, including compliance with Section 31 of Article I of the California Constitution (Proposition 209). However, she brings extensive experience advising organizations on equitable, legally compliant DEI strategies and is well-positioned to align future public sector engagements with applicable legal frameworks.

**13. Developing communication strategies highlighting the importance of DEI.**

The founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting, in her roles as a consultant and former Global Head of Inclusion and Diversity, has developed and advised on communication strategies that articulate the value and importance of DEI within corporate and nonprofit organizations. Her work includes crafting executive messaging, internal and external communications, and campaign strategies that align DEI goals with organizational values, engage key stakeholders, and reinforce a culture of inclusion and accountability.

Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420  
**PROJECT EXAMPLES**

## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CONSULTING SERVICES CAPABILITIES**

### **Summary of Services Provided Across Business Sectors**

Sampson Dearborn Consulting has successfully delivered Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) advisory and implementation services across a range of sectors, including transportation, hospitality, public utilities, biotechnology/pharmaceuticals, and nonprofit organizations. The firm's work has been grounded in organizational alignment, cultural competency, regulatory compliance, and sustainable impact.

### **Transportation Sector (Airline/Logistics Company)**

#### **Scope of Work:**

- Conducted a comprehensive assessment of the company's DEI programs, policies, and practices.
- Met with executive leadership and key stakeholders to gather qualitative and quantitative insights.
- Delivered a detailed findings and recommendations report, with benchmarking aligned to industry and national best practices.
- Developed an **action plan** rooted in organizational core values, operational goals, and DEI gaps, with measurable milestones and accountability structures.
- Provided **advisory services** on inclusive hiring, procurement practices, and DEI legal compliance.

#### **Experience Highlights:**

- Designed a DEI maturity framework to assess progress across talent, leadership, supplier diversity, and customer experience.
- Advised on inclusive communication strategies to support culture change across frontline and corporate operations.
- Presented findings to leadership and provided implementation coaching to DEI and HR leads.

### **Hospitality Sector (Hotel Services)**

#### **Scope of Work:**

- Delivered **advisory services** on embedding DEI into leadership development, customer service, and employee training protocols.
- Conducted **DEI best practice research** and developed sector-specific guidance for front-line hospitality management.
- Designed **DEI communications and learning materials** for a global, cross-functional workforces.

**Experience Highlights:**

- Helped reposition DEI as a driver of guest satisfaction, talent retention, and brand loyalty.
- Integrated accessibility and belonging into property-level staff trainings and leadership scorecards.
- Provided guidance on inclusive hiring practices in compliance with anti-discrimination laws.

**Public Utilities Sector (California-Based Utility Company)**

**Scope of Work:**

- Conducted **research and analysis** under guidance of general counsel on DEI best practices for public sector utilities.
- Advised leadership on embedding DEI strategies in talent recruitment, supplier diversity, and community engagement programs.
- Developed a **comprehensive communication strategy** to educate employees and the public about the utility's commitment to equity and inclusion within legal boundaries.

**Experience Highlights:**

- Delivered actionable recommendations that complied with state and federal law while advancing organizational culture and inclusive impact.
- Facilitated leadership briefings and internal workshops to align understanding of DEI within the constraints of public governance.

**Nonprofit Sector (Oakland Symphony)**

**Scope of Work:**

- Partnered with the Board of Directors and Executive Leadership to design and implement an **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Framework** tailored to the cultural arts sector.
- Facilitated **assessment and information-gathering sessions** with consultants, trustees, staff, and community stakeholders.
- Delivered **training and education** on inclusive governance, cultural competency, and community-centered programming.

**Experience Highlights:**

- Produced a sector-informed **EDI strategic plan** that addressed board composition, audience engagement, and programming equity.
- Strengthened the organization's capacity to address systemic inequities in arts access and representation.
- Presented recommendations to the Board of Trustees to support sustainable change and organizational accountability.

## Biotech/Pharmaceutical Sector

### Scope of Work:

- Provided **strategic Global Inclusion and Diversity leadership**, legal risks, and reputational opportunities to executive leadership, including the Global Head of HR and CEO.
- Delivered **communications support** to the Board of Trustees on emerging DEI issues.
- Conducted **DEI assessments**, leveraging employee feedback, business function reviews, and external benchmarking.

### Experience Highlights:

- Developed DEI frameworks that aligned with ESG goals, global compliance standards, and inclusive health equity initiatives.
- Advised on **inclusive practices in healthcare delivery**, clinical trial diversity, and accessibility.
- Supported cross-functional DEI integration across corporate affairs, procurement, legal, and talent acquisition.

### Cross-Sector Experience in Specific Service Categories

1. **Advisory Services on DEI Best Practices:** Delivered to all sectors with tailored insights relevant to industry, workforce demographics, and cultural expectations.
2. **DEI Training to Boards of Trustees:** Provided in nonprofit sectors with communications, custom modules, and facilitated dialogue.
3. **Assessments and Reporting:** Completed for hospitality, transportation, and biotech clients with rigorous reporting on gaps, benchmarks, and action plans.
4. **Board Engagement for DEI Assessments:** Conducted sessions with both board members to inform organizational strategy.
5. **Executive Leadership Engagement:** Held executive briefings, interviews, and strategy sessions, particularly with biotech/pharma c-suite and other executive leaders.
6. **Action Plan Development:** Delivered a phased implementation roadmap for several organizations across sectors, including finance, hospitality, transportation, and biotech.
7. **Research and Reporting:** Produced DEI best practices reports for public and private sector clients, incorporating policy, legal, and competitive insights.



**Services will include, but are not limited to, the following:**  
**DEI Program Review: Current and Future State**

**Phase I: Leadership Interviews**

- a. Interview and understand the expectations of the CalPERS Board of Administration with respect to the five pillars of CalPERS' DEI Framework.
- b. Interview key leadership positions within CalPERS, including the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operations Officer, Chief Health Director, Director of Human Resources, and Chief Operating Investment Officer to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current DEI programs and policies

**Phase II: Program Review & Assessment Conduct**

- a. A review of CalPERS policies, processes, and programs against a benchmark of leading public, non-profit, and private sector organizations. The review should be both a gap assessment and an evaluation of CalPERS' DEI Framework.
- b. The assessment should include an environmental scan of potential legal and reputational risks associated with DEI changes at the state and federal levels. Prepare and present a report of the assessment's findings to the Board in an open session meeting.

**Phase III: Action Plan Recommendations**

Present to the Board and leadership, recommendations for an action plan based upon the assessment's findings:

- a. Plan will include actionable goals in alignment with the Board's fiduciary duty and CalPERS' 5-year strategic plan to address growth and development opportunities, and an ongoing implementation strategy for the DEI program.
- b. Recommendations will incorporate best practices, training, and program development goals for growth internally (people and processes) and externally (health and investment programs) that align with Section 31 of Article I of the California Constitution (commonly referred to as "Proposition 209").

**Phase IV: Action Plan Implementation**

- a. Provide guidance and partnership in the implementation of the DEI program action plan, including but not limited to enhancement or development of program goals, measurement and reporting tools, and activities and communication strategies to increase visibility and awareness to highlight the importance of CalPERS' DEI efforts and priorities.

Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420  
**Statement of Work (SOW)**

**Project Title:** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Program Assessment and Strategic Enhancement

**Client:** California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

**Consultant:** Sampson Dearborn Consulting

**Objective**

To support CalPERS in advancing its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) goals by identifying gaps and opportunities within its current DEI framework. This engagement will benchmark CalPERS' efforts against leading practices in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, and deliver actionable recommendations supported by research, stakeholder input, and communications strategy alignment.

**Scope of Work**

The project will be structured into four phases:

**Phase I: Leadership Interviews**

**Estimated Hours:** 100

**Objectives:**

- Gain insights into the current DEI vision, priorities, and perceived gaps from executive leadership and key stakeholders.
- Build trust and alignment for assessment and future recommendations.

**Deliverables:**

- Interview protocol and stakeholder map
- Customized interview guide(s)
- Summary report of findings and key themes
- Presentation of preliminary insights to project sponsors

**Phase II: Program Review & Assessment**

**Estimated Hours:** 275

**Objectives:**

- Conduct a comprehensive review of CalPERS' DEI programs, policies, measurements, and communications.
- Benchmark against DEI best practices in leading private, public, and nonprofit organizations.
- Assess alignment with federal and state law, including Proposition 209.

**Deliverables:**

- Comparative DEI landscape analysis
- Program audit and gap assessment
- Preliminary findings presentation
- Periodic progress updates to CalPERS Board

### **Phase III: Action Plan Recommendations**

**Estimated Hours:** 175

**Objectives:**

- Translate assessment findings into a strategic and operational DEI action plan.
- Identify short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations with measurable goals.
- Ensure alignment with CalPERS' core values, compliance obligations, and strategic vision.

**Deliverables:**

- Comprehensive DEI Strategic Action Plan
- Prioritized initiatives and performance indicators
- Communication strategy recommendations
- Board presentation of final recommendations

### **Phase IV: Action Plan Implementation**

**Estimated Hours:** 175

**Objectives:**

- Support initial implementation of selected DEI strategies.
- Provide expert guidance, tools, and training for internal adoption.
- Facilitate ongoing alignment across departments and leadership.

**Deliverables:**

- Implementation roadmap
- DEI integration tools and templates
- Staff training and advisory support
- Final implementation report and Board update

### **Qualifications**

Sampson Dearborn Consulting brings deep experience in organizational assessments, DEI strategy, and organizational leadership advisory. The founder and principal consultant has led large-scale DEI initiatives across industries and has a track record of helping institutions align their equity efforts with mission, compliance, and impact.

## **Key Persons Names and Bios**

**Perika Sampson** is a seasoned executive, strategist, and nationally recognized thought leader in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). With more than two decades of experience advancing inclusive cultures and equitable practices, Perika brings a powerful blend of corporate leadership, cross-sector consulting, and community engagement to her work. Her mission-driven approach helps organizations create sustainable change in the workplace and broader society.

As Global Head of Inclusion and Diversity at Gilead Sciences, Perika led the company's DEI Center of Excellence, advising executive leadership and a global workforce of 17,000 employees across 35 countries. She oversaw a team of subject matter experts and directed enterprise-wide initiatives that spanned health equity, employee resource group strategy, inclusive talent management, community engagement, and global DEI training. Her work also extended to Gilead's Corporate Responsibility and ESG committees, reinforcing her influence on corporate social impact.

Previously, Perika served as Regional Diversity Officer at Morgan Stanley, where she drove DEI strategy and execution across the firm's wealth management division. She collaborated with senior leaders to embed diversity in business development, talent acquisition, and employee engagement strategies.

Prior to her DEI leadership roles, she served as Vice President of Marketing and Strategy at Bank One (now JPMorgan Chase), where she developed initiatives that supported national growth in retail banking and marketing.

As the founder and principal of Sampson Dearborn Consulting, Perika has spent over a decade advising Fortune 500 companies, nonprofits, and public sector organizations on DEI strategy, leadership development, and organizational transformation. Her consulting portfolio spans industries including financial services, healthcare, retail, transportation, and utilities. She specializes in building and refining DEI frameworks that accelerate impact, align with business goals, and drive measurable results.

Perika's influence extends beyond the corporate sphere. A UCLA alumna, she currently serves on the board of the American Heart Association Los Angeles, where she leads efforts focused on health equity. She is Board Member Emeritus and Taskforce Chair for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the Oakland Symphony and recently completed board service with the Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir. Her civic leadership has included service on the City of Los Angeles Private Sector Taskforce on Race and Equity and the Virginia Workforce Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center advisory board.

Known for her strategic vision, authenticity, and ability to mobilize others toward inclusive excellence, Perika Sampson continues to shape the national conversation on equity in business and beyond. Her career is a testament to the transformative power of leadership grounded in purpose, integrity, and impact.

**Dr. Cynthia Worthen** is an accomplished consultant and adjunct associate professor with deep expertise in higher education leadership, academic operations, and institutional strategy. With a distinguished career in academic administration, she has held senior leadership roles including Vice President of Academic Affairs at Argosy University (Hawaii and Washington, DC) and Dean of Academic Affairs at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, where she oversaw faculty and curriculum development across all campus programs.

Dr. Worthen also served as Campus Director at the University of Redlands (Burbank campus) and Program Coordinator at the University of La Verne. Her leadership has spanned strategic planning, academic policy development, faculty oversight, and program accreditation, with a consistent focus on student success, operational excellence, and inclusive education.

She earned her Doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of La Verne and a master's degree in public administration from Georgia College and State University. A frequent conference presenter on student achievement, diversity, and academic leadership, Dr. Worthen has contributed to numerous initiatives in regulatory compliance and change management. She has served on the Board of Advisors for Deans and Provosts and as Secretary of the Board of Directors for the Alliance for Adult Higher Education.

**Erika Kelly** is a seasoned consultant and accomplished diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) leader with over 15 years of experience designing and executing DEI strategies in financial services and biotechnology sectors. She has served as a trusted advisor to regional and local executives, aligning DEI efforts with business objectives to drive recruitment, strengthen culture, and accelerate business performance.

Erika brings a strong track record of building cross-functional alliances, leading enterprise-wide initiatives, and cultivating strategic partnerships with national organizations. Her professional experience includes impactful roles at Gilead Sciences, Morgan Stanley, and AT&T, where she consistently advanced inclusive talent strategies and business growth.

Erika holds a Bachelor of Science in Education and Human Resource Development from Texas A&M University and an MBA with a concentration in Human Resource Management from the University of Texas.

**Sandra Square** is a certified project management consultant with over 20 years of experience leading high-impact strategic initiatives, primarily within the financial services sector. Known for her ability to navigate seamlessly between big-picture strategy and hands-on execution, Sandra helps organizations drive successful project outcomes through disciplined planning, cross-functional collaboration, and results-oriented implementation.

She has led complex program and project portfolios for major institutions, including Wells Fargo Bank, Bank of America, and Bank of the West, earning a reputation as a trusted partner to executives, stakeholders, and cross-functional teams. Her consistent success is rooted in strong relationship-building, clear communication, and a commitment to operational excellence.

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Sandra also brings deep experience in diversity consulting, having worked with Diversity Best Practices to analyze employment policies, conduct stakeholder interviews and surveys, and deliver organizational DEI assessments across sectors, including insurance, healthcare, and nonprofit. She later contributed to Dearborn Consulting, where she authored comprehensive diversity evaluation reports for corporate clients.

With a bachelor's degree in creative writing and French from San Francisco State University, Sandra complements her consulting work with a strong foundation in professional writing and editing. She has produced white papers, regulatory reports, and executive summaries that communicate complex information with clarity and precision.

**Karen Sampson** is a seasoned consultant with over 20 years of experience in operations support, data analysis, and project management within the energy and corporate sectors. Before retiring, she held national and regional roles at leading organizations such as Marathon Oil, Tesoro, and BP Arco, where she supported cross-functional teams and streamlined operational processes to enhance efficiency and performance.

Karen brings deep expertise in technology integration and data systems, with advanced proficiency in platforms including SAP, Prometheus, and Tableau. She is known for her ability to translate complex data into actionable insights and for managing enterprise systems that support critical business functions.

Throughout her career, Karen has been an active contributor to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives, applying her operational lens to promote more inclusive workplace practices and organizational change.

She holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix and has earned professional certificates in Human Resource Management and Project Management from California State University, Long Beach.

**ATTACHMENT G**



**DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION**

CalPERS Board of Administration requires contract participation from certified Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs) in its contract process, unless specifically exempted. Only State of California, Office of Small Business and DVBE Services (OSDS) may certify a DVBE. The DVBE must perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation to be considered compliant with the DVBE program requirements. In order to obtain DVBE incentive participation credit, the contractor must be a certified DVBE **or** subcontract with a DVBE, certified by OSDS, **no later than** the Final Filing Date as specified in the Schedule of Events.

**Please read the following requirements carefully. Completion of this document is required regardless of intent to pursue DVBE incentive participation.**

**DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this DVBE incentive participation, the following definitions apply:

Disabled veteran means a veteran of the military, naval, or air services of the United States with a service-connected disability of ten percent or more, who is a resident of the State of California.

DVBE means a business concern certified by OSDS as meeting all of the following:

1. A sole proprietorship at least 51 percent owned by one or more disabled veterans; or in the case of a publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of its stock is owned by one or more disabled veterans; a subsidiary which is wholly owned by a parent corporation, but only if at least 51 percent of the voting stock of the parent corporation is owned by one or more disabled veterans; or a joint venture in which at least 51 percent of the joint venture's management and control and earnings are held by one or more disabled veterans.
2. The management and control of the daily business operations are by one or more disabled veterans. The disabled veterans who exercise management and control are not required to be the same disabled veterans as the owners of the business concern.
3. It is a sole proprietorship, corporation, or partnership with its home office located in the United States, which is not a branch or subsidiary of a foreign corporation, foreign firm, or other foreign based business.

**Note:** View certification information at <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/PD/About/Page-Content/PD-Branch-Intro-Accordion-List/OSDS/OSDS> or contact the OSDS at (916) 375-4940.

Commercially Useful Function A DVBE contractor, subcontractors, or supplier is considered performing a commercially useful function when it meets all of the following criteria:

1. The business concern is:
  - (a) Responsible for the execution of a distinct element of the work of the contract;
  - (b) Carries out its obligation by actually performing, managing, or supervising the work involved;
  - (c) Performs work that is normal for its business, services and function; and
2. The business concern is not further subcontracting a greater portion of the work that is greater than would be expected by normal industry practices.

A contractor, subcontractor, or supplier will not be considered to perform a commercially useful function if the contractor's, subcontractor's, or supplier's role is limited to that of an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of small business, microbusiness, or DVBE participation. When subcontracting to small, micro, or DVBE subcontractors, the intent is for the subcontractor to provide goods or services required for the performance of the contract rather than artificial or incidental participation that provides an "appearance" of participation to meet the socio-economic objectives of these programs.

## DVBE PARTICIPATION OPTIONS AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to be **responsive** to the incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation and select one of the following options:

Option A – DVBE Incentive. A bidder may submit DVBE participation percentages to receive and qualify for the incentive program. Bids that fail to submit the required form and confirm the level of DVBE participation will not be eligible to receive the DVBE incentive. Refer to RFP, Section V Proposal Requirements, A(8) Technical Proposal/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation and Incentive.

Option B- No DVBE Incentive Participation. A bidder may opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

### **USE/SUBSTITUTION OF PROPOSED DVBE**

If awarded the contract, the successful bidder must use the DVBE subcontractor and/or supplier proposed in their final bid/proposal unless the contractor requests substitution via prior written notice to CalPERS and CalPERS approves such substitution. At a minimum, the request must include:

- A. A written explanation for the substitution;
- B. The identity of the person or firm substituted;



- C. Any change in the work or dollar/percentage amount caused by the substitution; and
- D. A revised DVBE Contract Participation (Attachment G, Exhibit 1) and applicable certification(s).

The request and CalPERS approval or disapproval of the substitution shall not affect compliance with any other provision of law, or any other contract requirements relating to substitution of subcontractors.

## QUESTIONS

The information below is provided to answer commonly asked questions and clarify potential misconceptions of the contract participation goal requirement. If further clarification is necessary, you may contact CalPERS Contracts Officer at (916) 795-3020 or [ossd\\_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov](mailto:ossd_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov) for assistance.

### **Meeting the Goal**

1. Proposing incentive goal attainment is a commitment to use disabled veteran business enterprises for the established percent of the contract amount. If awarded a contract, CalPERS expects the DVBE subcontractors or suppliers to be utilized as identified in your proposal, unless a substitution is approved by CalPERS.
2. An expression of intent to subcontract with unidentified DVBE firms at some future date is insufficient to comply with DVBE incentive participation. Commitments must be finalized upon submission of your contract participation documentation to CalPERS.
3. **Out-of-state firms** are **not** excluded from participating in the DVBE incentive program. To do business with CalPERS, completion of this document is required for all bidders.



### DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

In order to be responsive to incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation. Check the appropriate box to indicate the option with which you choose to comply. Please read all instructions carefully prior to completing this form. **Only California certified DVBEs who perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation may be used to satisfy the DVBE program requirements.**

This solicitation does **not** have a DVBE participation requirement; however, you may still commit to an incentive percentage to obtain preference points.

☐ ~~Option A~~ — I commit to the percent listed below to qualify for the DVBE incentive program.

☐ ~~1% – 1.99%~~

☐ ~~2% – 2.99%~~

☐ ~~3% – 3.99%~~

☐ ~~4% – 4.99%~~

☐ ~~5% or Over~~

**X** **Option B** – I opt out of participating in the DVBE incentive program.

---

~~In order to meet the DVBE participation requirement, list one or more DVBE vendors and the work to be performed.~~

~~DVBE Company Name:~~ \_\_\_\_\_

~~E-mail (if available):~~ \_\_\_\_\_

~~DVBE Certification Number:~~ \_\_\_\_\_

~~Telephone Number: (XXX) XXX XXXX~~

~~Contact Name:~~ \_\_\_\_\_

~~Fax Number: (XXX) XXX XXXX~~

~~Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:~~  
\_\_\_\_\_

~~Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:~~

☐ ~~SB~~ ☐ ~~MB~~

~~Work performed or goods provided for this contract:~~  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

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**DVBE Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail (if available):** \_\_\_\_\_

**DVBE Certification Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DVBE Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail (if available):** \_\_\_\_\_

**DVBE Certification Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DVBE Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail (if available):** \_\_\_\_\_

**DVBE Certification Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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☐ I commit to utilizing one or more of the DVBEs listed above in order to meet the total claimed DVBE% indicated, and certify that the DVBE vendor(s) listed above have been notified and agree to provide services for this contract.

☒ I opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

*Perika J. Sampson*

Contractor Signature

**June 30, 2025**

Date Signed

## ATTACHMENT H

### LIST OF PROPOSED SUBCONTRACTORS

#### List of Proposed Subcontractors

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this attachment. Please check the applicable box. (A photo copy of this form is acceptable if additional sheets are required.)

☒ No subcontractors will be used.

☐ ~~No subcontractors will be used other than the DVBE firms identified on Attachment G, Exhibit 1.~~

☐ ~~The following subcontractors will be employed and will perform the work or services identified below.~~

☐ ~~Non-small business preference to be applied by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.~~

---

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:

- 
- 1 If your firm is claiming the non-small business preference by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.

**SAMPSON DEARBORN CONSULTING – CALIFORNIA Business Search**

The California Business Search provides access to available information for corporations, limited liability companies and limited partnerships of record with the California Secretary of State, with free PDF copies of over 17 million imaged business entity documents, including the most recent imaged Statements of Information filed for Corporations and Limited Liability Companies.

|                            |                                                                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Initial Filing Date</i> | <b>09/22/2023</b>                                                       |
| <i>Status</i>              | <b>Active</b>                                                           |
| <i>Standing - SOS</i>      | <b>Good</b>                                                             |
| <i>Standing - FTB</i>      | <b>Good</b>                                                             |
| <i>Standing - Agent</i>    | <b>Good</b>                                                             |
| <i>Standing - VCFCF</i>    | <b>Good</b>                                                             |
| <i>Formed In</i>           | <b>CALIFORNIA</b>                                                       |
| <i>Entity Type</i>         | <b>Limited Liability Company - CA</b>                                   |
| <i>Principal Address</i>   | <b>3740 MULLEN PL VIEW PARK, CA 90043</b>                               |
| <i>Mailing Address</i>     | <b>3740 MULLEN PL VIEW PARK,CA90043</b>                                 |
| <i>Agent</i>               | <b>Individual Perika J Sampson 3740 MULLEN PL LOS ANGELES, CA 90043</b> |

**ATTACHMENT I**



**Required Attachments Certification Checklist  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420**

Firm's Name: **SAMPSON DEARBORN CONSULTING**

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this Attachment. Complete the "Proposer Certification" column and submit this checklist to confirm the items submitted with your Proposal. CalPERS staff will use the shaded "CalPERS Verification" column to confirm receipt of all required documents.



Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420

| Attachment Name/Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Proposer Certification                      | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted Cover Letter signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.<br>a. A statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer good for 180 calendar days.<br>b. A statement expressing the Proposer's willingness to perform the services as described in this RFP.<br>c. A statement expressing the Proposer's availability of staff and other required resources for performing all services and providing all deliverables as described in the RFP. | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment of Proposal packages as specified in the RFP.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF marked "Master Copy" containing original signatures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment marked "Reproduction Copy." All pages containing proprietary information should be removed and a cover sheet must be included which provides:<br>1. the firm's names;<br>2. total number of pages <b>44</b> ; and<br>3. identification of all pages removed due to proprietary information.<br>Note: Entire proposal may not be marked confidential and proprietary.                                                                                                    | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Minimum Qualifications Certification (Attachment A) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Proposal/Proposer Certification Sheet (Attachment B) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.<br><br>Small Business certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    X No<br>DVBE certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    X No<br>Micro Business certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes    X No                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

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Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                             |                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration (Attachment C) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contracting Act Declarations (Attachment D) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contract-Related Disclosure Form (Attachment E) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Proposal Questionnaire (Attachment F)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation (Attachment G, including Exhibit 1)</p> <p>Option A - Meets DVBE Participation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <b>X No</b><br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option B - DVBE Incentive Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <b>X No</b><br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option C – Elected no DVBE participation? <b>X Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Option D – California Certified Micro Business? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <b>X No</b></p> | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>List of Proposed Subcontractors (Attachment H) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <b>X No</b></p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <b>X No</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Required Attachments Certification Checklist (Attachment I)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Joint Venture proposal?</p> <p>If yes, was documentation submitted describing the responsibilities of each party in the Joint Venture, Exhibit 1? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Preference Program request?</p> <p>Small Business Preference claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Target Area Contract Preference Act claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><b>X No</b>                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Is the Corporation registered and in good standing to do business? <b>X Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Submit current copy of a Secretary of State Certification or Business License<br/>(Check the California Secretary of State website at <a href="https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business">https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business</a> to verify status)</p> <p>Is the company an LLP? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <b>X No</b></p>                                         | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

Sampson Dearborn Consulting  
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services  
Response to RFP No. 2024-9420

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                             |                                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted the Fee Proposal (Attachment J) in a separate document in the Proposal package email. Fee Proposal clearly labeled as "FEE PROPOSAL FOR RFP NO. 2024-9375, submitted by <b>SAMPSON DEARBORN CONSULTING</b> | <b>X Yes</b><br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|

| Verifications Performed by CalPERS Staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Has Contractor been decertified by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing?<br><br>(Check the California Regulatory Notice Register at <a href="https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/">https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/</a> ) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of CalPERS Reviewer

\_\_\_\_\_

Date



## REPRODUCTION COPY

**California Public Employees' Retirement System Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**

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**Firm Name:** The Nova Collective

**Total Number of Pages:** 61 pages

**Pages Removed Due to Proprietary Information:** None

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**Submitted by:** The Nova Collective, LLC 1819 W Grand Ave, Suite 203 Chicago, IL 60622

**Date:** June 30, 2025



**6/30/2025**

Contracts Officer  
California Public Employees' Retirement System  
400 Q Street  
Sacramento, CA 95811

**RE: Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**

Dear CalPERS Contracts Officer,

On behalf of The Nova Collective, I am pleased to submit our proposal in response to CalPERS' Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420 for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services. As Managing Director, I am authorized to bind The Nova Collective contractually and hereby submit this proposal with full authority to enter into an agreement with CalPERS.

Firm and Irrevocable Offer

This proposal constitutes a firm and irrevocable offer that shall remain valid and binding for one hundred eighty (180) calendar days from the final filing date of June 30, 2025.

Willingness to Perform Services

The Nova Collective expressly confirms our willingness and commitment to perform all services as described in RFP No. 2024-9420, including the comprehensive four-phase DEI program review encompassing leadership interviews, program assessment, action plan recommendations, and implementation guidance.

Availability of Staff and Resources

We certify that The Nova Collective has the necessary staff, expertise, and organizational resources readily available to perform all services and provide all deliverables as outlined in this RFP. Our full-time team of 20 multidisciplinary experts stands ready to begin work immediately upon contract execution, with the same senior leadership team that successfully managed our multi-million dollar California Department of Health & Human Services initiative personally leading the CalPERS engagement.

California Legal Compliance Expertise

We understand CalPERS' unique position as the largest public pension fund in the United States and the critical importance of ensuring all DEI initiatives comply with California's constitutional requirements, including Proposition 209. Our extensive experience with the California Department of Health & Human Services, where all programming undergoes rigorous legal review for constitutional compliance, demonstrates our proven ability to advance meaningful equity goals while maintaining full legal compliance within California's regulatory framework.



All deliverables will meet Section 508 accessibility requirements, ADA compliance standards, and WCAG 2.0 AA success criteria. Our established accessibility compliance procedures ensure all materials will be fully accessible to all stakeholders, with any remediation costs borne by The Nova Collective.

The Nova Collective, LLC is a certified Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) with over eight years of experience helping organizations build stronger, more effective workplace cultures. Our California DHHS engagement, valued at over \$2 million, demonstrates our proven ability to support large-scale public sector DEI initiatives across complex organizational structures while ensuring constitutional compliance and delivering measurable results.

Our custom programming utilizes our proprietary Educate, Engage, Connect framework and data-driven Belonging Index methodology to create behavior-focused training that produces measurable culture change. We conduct deep discovery to understand specific organizational contexts and co-create solutions tailored to unique cultures, objectives, and stakeholder needs.

We look forward to partnering with CalPERS in strengthening and advancing your diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives across all five pillars: Culture, Talent Management, Health Equity, Supplier Diversity, and Investments.

Respectfully submitted,

**Brynne Hovde**  
Managing Director

**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Minimum Qualifications Certification**

As prescribed in the Minimum Qualifications, Section IV, of the Request for Proposal (RFP), all Proposers are required to sign and return this Attachment, along with written evidence of how each qualification is met on Attachment A, Exhibit 1, Evidence of Minimum Qualifications. The undersigned hereby certifies that the firm submitting this response fulfills the minimum qualifications outlined below, as well as the requirements contained in the RFP.

**Minimum Qualifications include:**

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.
- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.
- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.
- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least one (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.
- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)  
Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420  
Attachment A  
Page 2 of 2

**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**



Authorized Signature

6/30/2025  
Date

The Nova Collective  
Name of Firm

Brynne Hovde, Managing Director  
Name and Title (Please Print)



### Evidence of Minimum Qualifications

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.

| Organization Name   | Years of Operation |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| The Nova Collective | 8 years            |

- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.

| Firm                                             | Years of Experience     | Type                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Contact Person                                               | Contact Information |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| California Department of Health & Human Services | 3+ years (2022-present) | <b>Comprehensive DEI Program Development:</b><br>Large-scale assessment, strategic planning, curriculum development, training delivery (300+ sessions), brand guidelines development, multimedia content creation, and operational toolkit | Ana Estrada Daniels, CEO, Anavo Solutions (Prime Contractor) | ana@anavo.solutions |

|                                   |                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |             |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
|                                   |                         | development reaching<br>3,500+ employees<br>across 29 counties                                                                                                                                                                               |             |                         |
| Comcast                           | 4+ years (2020-present) | <b>Enterprise DEI Strategy &amp; Training:</b><br>Multi-year partnership developing enterprise-wide DEI programs, assessment tools, strategic planning, custom content creation, and scalable training delivery for 80,000+ global employees | Liza Merida | liza_merida@comcast.com |
| Jackson Hole Community Foundation | 2+ years (2019-2021)    | <b>Regional DEI Program Development:</b><br>Strategic DEI planning for foundation and grantee network, assessment and data collection, training deployment, and development of custom                                                        | Shelby Read | sread@cfjacksonhole.org |

|  |  |                                                     |  |  |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------|--|--|
|  |  | decision-making tools<br>for nonprofit<br>community |  |  |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------|--|--|

- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.

| Firm                                                                    | Years of Experience     | Type                                                                                                                                                                                         | Contact Person                                               | Contact Information |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| California Department of Health & Human Services                        | 2+ years (2022-present) | <b>Public Sector DEI:</b><br>Statewide equity-centered training, cultural humility programs, inclusive leadership development, bias reduction training for thousands of government employees | Ana Estrada Daniels, CEO, Anavo Solutions (Prime Contractor) | ana@anavo.solutions |
| American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET) | 1+ years (2023-2024)    | <b>Medical Professional Association DEI:</b><br>Comprehensive organizational DEI assessment and strategic consultation, including quantitative and qualitative sentiment analysis,           | Catherine Fry                                                | CFry@aspet.org      |

|                                       |                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                |                    |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|
|                                       |                      | focus group facilitation, policy review, and development of actionable recommendations for advancing equity within scientific and medical professional communities that directly influence healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.                                    |                |                    |
| Federal Home Loan Bank Boston/Chicago | 3+ years (2019-2022) | <b>Regulated Financial Institution DEI:</b><br>Multi-year DEI consultation services for cooperative financial institutions operating under federal regulatory oversight, including organizational culture assessment, strategic planning, governance integration of DEI | Cedric Thurman | CThurman@fhlbc.com |

|  |  |                                                                                                                                                                                |  |  |
|--|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|
|  |  | principles, leadership development, and compliance-aware equity initiatives within highly regulated, risk-averse financial environments managing significant asset portfolios. |  |  |
|--|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|

- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least one (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.

| Firm                                                             | Years of Experience | Type                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Contact Person  | Contact Information |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| American Statistical Association<br>(Nova Team Member: Noor Ali) | 2 (2022 - 2023)     | <b>Professional Association Board Consultation</b> - As part of our engagement, we provided comprehensive board education and strategic consultation including board member training on DEI advocacy, strategic | Ron Wasserstein | ron@amstat.org      |

|                                                                             |                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |             |                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
|                                                                             |                  | messaging frameworks, governance document audits (constitution, bylaws, policies), and organizational development guidance for professional association leadership transition and stakeholder communication strategies.                                                     |             |                         |
| Jackson Hole Community Foundation<br><br>(Nova Team Member: Becca Glodoski) | 2+ (2019 - 2021) | <b>Foundation Board Consultation</b> - As part of our engagement, provided strategic DEI education and planning for foundation board members, direct board engagement during assessment phases, and development of Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Charter addressing | Shelby Read | sread@cfjacksonhole.org |

|                                                                                |                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                 |                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                |                    | investment practices through an equity lens.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                 |                                                 |
| Friends of the Oak Park Conservancy<br><br>(Nova Team Member: Dr. Jaci Devine) | 2 (2024 - present) | <b>Non-profit Board Consultation:</b> Service for multiple 501(c)3 organizations including Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory. Current services include committee leadership (Communication Committee, Funding Committee), annual report development, and strategic planning facilitation using measurement dashboard methodologies. Prior to joining the board, provided grant writing consultation services to support organizational funding initiatives. | Judy Klem, Executive Director<br><br>Sue Boyer, Board President | director@fopcon.org<br><br>president@fopcon.org |



- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

| Firm                | Type                                                                                                                                                 | Contact Person   | Contact Information     |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Delta Air Lines     | <b>Corporate Client (Fortune 500)</b> - Major airline with extensive investment management and supplier diversity operations                         | Emma Kate Protis | emma.protis@delta.com   |
| Comcast Corporation | <b>Corporate Client (Fortune 500)</b> - Media/telecommunications conglomerate with substantial asset management and procurement responsibilities     | Liza Merida      | liza_merida@comcast.com |
| Netflix             | <b>Corporate Client (Fortune 500)</b> - Global streaming entertainment leader with significant investment portfolios and supplier diversity programs | Alex LaCasse     | alacasse@netflix.com    |

## PROPOSAL/PROPOSER CERTIFICATION SHEET

### 1. Designation of Official Contact Person

The individual to whom all information and correspondence regarding this RFP should be transmitted is:

Firm Name: The Nova Collective  
Contact Name and Title: Brynne Hovde, Managing Director  
Address: 1819 W Grand Avenue, Suite 203, Chicago, IL 60622  
Phone Number: 773-750-1131  
Fax Number: N/A  
E-Mail Address: brynne@thenovacollective.com

### 2. Indicate your organization type:

- ☒ Limited Liability Company
- ☐ Partnership
- ☐ Joint Venture (If checked, attach required documentation. See "Exhibit 1")
- ☐ Limited Liability Corporation
- ☐ Corporation (Corporation Number \_\_\_\_\_)
- ☐ Sole Proprietorship

3. Federal Employer ID No. (FEIN): 81-5024986

4. California Corporation Number: N/A

### 5. Are you certified with the Department of General Services, Office of Small Business and DVBE Certification as:

- |                                         |                              |                                        |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| a. California Small Business            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. California Micro Business            | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**NOTE:** A copy of your Certification is required to be included if either of the above items is checked "Yes"

### 6. Statement of Compliance

Proposer has, unless exempted, complied with the State of California's requirements pertaining to the development, implementation, and maintenance of the nondiscrimination program. (California Government Code section 12990 (a-f) and Title 2, California Code of Regulations, section 8103, et. seq.)

**7. Does your Proposal contain Proprietary Information?**

Yes ☐ No ☒ (If yes, attach a separate sheet to this certification which specifically itemizes the section(s) marked as "proprietary information". See "Submission of Proposals".)

**8. Reproduction Copy**

The total number of pages contained in the "Copy for Reproduction": 61 (See "Submission of Proposals".)

**9. Contract Execution Information**

If awarded a contract, the individual to whom the contract should be transmitted is:

Contact Name and Title: Brynne Hovde, Managing Director

Address: 1819 W Grand Ave, Suite 203, Chicago, IL 60622

Phone Number: 773-750-1131

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: brynne@thenovacollective.com

The name of the company officer authorized to sign this contract is:

Name and Title: Brynne Hovde, Managing Director

Address: 1819 W Grand Ave, Suite 203, Chicago, IL 60622

Phone Number: 773-750-1131

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: brynne@thenovacollective.com

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**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**



6/30/2025

Date

Authorized Signature

Brynne Hovde, Managing Director  
Name and Title (Please Print)



**California Public Employees' Retirement System**

**California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration**

Firm's Name: The Nova Collective

The firm named above certifies, that the firm is eligible to contract with the State of California and CalPERS, pursuant to the provisions of the California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act of 2003 (Public Contract Code section 10286 et. seq.).

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brynne Hovde", written over a horizontal line.

Authorized Signature

6/30/25  
Date

Brynne Hovde, Managing Director  
Name and Title (Please Print)



## **California Public Employees' Retirement System Contracting Act Declarations**

CalPERS is prohibited from contracting with individuals or firms who do business subject to the following statutes. By signing this form, you are certifying that you or your firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, a state agency.

### **Sudan Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477, a bidder or proposer who is a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm does not currently have, and has not had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, and in accordance with Public Contract Code section 10478, this firm hereby certifies it is not a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).
- ☐ This firm is a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), but has received written permission from the Department of General Services (DGS) to submit a bid or proposal pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477(b). A copy of the written permission from DGS is included with the firm's bid or proposal.
- ☐ This firm currently has, or has had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, but hereby certifies that is not a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).

### **Iran Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to the Iran Contracting Act of 2010 (Public Contract Code section 2201, et. seq.), if a bidder, at the time of the bid or proposal for a new contract, or renewal of an existing contract, has engaged<sup>1</sup> in investment activities in Iran (as described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5) is ineligible, and shall not, bid on, submit a proposal for, or enter into or renew a contract with a

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<sup>1</sup> Or such person is identified on a list created by the Department of General Services pursuant to Section 2203(b) as a person engaging in investment activities in Iran.

public entity for goods or services for one million dollars (\$1,000,000) or more. (Public Contract Code section 2203(a)).

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm, or person, hereby certifies that it (or he or she) is not identified on the DGS list created pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(b) as a firm or person engaging in "investment activities" in Iran described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5(a) or 2202.5(b).
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies it is permitted to submit a bid or proposal to a public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c) because its investment activities in Iran were (1) made before July 1, 2010, (2) were not expanded or renewed after July 1, 2010, and (3) the firm has adopted, publicized, and is implementing a formal plan to cease the investment activities in Iran and to refrain from engaging in any new investments in Iran.
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies that although it is a financial institution that extends twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) or more in credit to another person, for 45 days or more, the person who will use the credit to provide goods or services in the energy sector in Iran is a person permitted to submit a bid or proposal to the public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c). (See Public Contract Code section 2202.3(d)).

**Democratic Republic of the Congo Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10490 and section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)), a scrutinized company (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services related to products or services that are the reason the firm must comply with section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This is not a "scrutinized company" or does not currently use any conflict mineral products that are necessary to the functionality or production of a product manufactured by the firm from the Democratic Public of the Congo or an "adjoining country" (see 15 U.S.C.A § 78(m)(p)), and section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (Pub.L. No.111-203, (July 21, 2010) 124 Stat. 1376)).
- ☐ This firm has ceased to be regarded as a "scrutinized company" (as defined by Cal. Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) because (1) it is not in violation of section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)(p)); or (2) it has filed an amended or corrective filing under section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which filing corrected the violations; or (3) three years have passed since the date of the final judgment or settlement entered in a civil or administrative action brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).



- ☐ Disclosure requirements have been temporarily waived by the SEC because the President of the United States has transmitted a determination that the waiver or revision is in the national security interest of the United States, or the disclosure requirements have been terminated because the President has determined and certified to the appropriate congressional committees that no armed groups continue to be directly involved and benefitting from this firm's commercial activity involving conflict minerals.

**Unruh Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 2010, a bidder or proposer who proposes to enter into or renew a contract with a state agency with respect to any contract in the amount of \$100,000 or more must certify, under penalty of perjury, at the time the bid or proposal is submitted or the contract is renewed that they are in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, and that any policy that they have against any sovereign nation or peoples recognized by the government of the United States, including, but not limited to, the nation and people of Israel, is not used to discriminate in violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act or the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- x This firm certifies that it is in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act, as defined in Public Contract Code Section 2010.

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make these declarations on behalf of the above-named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**



Authorized Signature

Brynne Hovde, Managing Director  
Name and Title (Please Print)

6/30/25

Date

The Nova Collective  
Firm Name (Please Print)



**CalPERS Contract-Related Disclosure Form**

*(To be used if Contractor is not required to file a  
Placement Agent Information Disclosure Form (2 CCR §559))*

**This form is to be used for all Contract-Related Disclosures, including Proposals.**

Please refer to title 2 California Code Regulations section 559.1 (b)(1) through (b)(3), prior to completing this form.

a. Solicitation or Contract Number:

2024-9420

b. Proposer or Contractor Name:

The Nova Collective

c. Name of Individual Authorized to bind the Proposer or Contractor:

Brynne Hovde

d. Contact Person (if different than above):

Brynne Hovde

e. E-mail Address:

brynne@thenovacollective.com

f. Phone No:

773-750-1131

g. Name of CalPERS Contact (if applicable):

N/A



California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment E

Page 2 of 3

Have you, your firm or your firm's principals, employees, agents, or affiliates compensated or agreed to compensate, directly or indirectly, any Agent as defined in section 559.1(a)(1) (whether or not employed by you) or any entity to act as Agent in connection with this Solicitation or Contract? (§559.1 (b)(1))

☐ Yes. ☒ No.

**If you checked Yes, please respond to questions 1 through 5 below, and sign and date the Form on the final page.**

**If you checked No, please respond to question 5 below, and sign and date this Form on the final page.**

1. Please list the names and relationships for each Agent in connection with the CalPERS Solicitation or Contract, including a description of the relationship with the Proposer or Contractor. (Add an additional page if necessary.) Please check the box to the left if the Agent is a current or former CalPERS Board Member, Staff Member, consultant, or has a Familial Relationship with any such individual.

|                          | Name | Relationship |
|--------------------------|------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |

2. Please attach a copy of all contracts, agreements, or other documents memorializing the relationship between the Proposer or Contractor and the Agent. When an *entity* is retained as an Agent, please also include the requested information for any officer, director, or employee actively providing Agent services with regard to CalPERS or receiving more than 15% of the Agent fees.
3. Provide a description of any financial or Familial Relationship(s) between the Agent and a Board Member or Staff Member, including the names of the Board Member(s) and/or Staff Members:

4. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Agent to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.
  
5. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Proposer or Contractor to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.

None

By executing this form the undersigned represents and warrants the information set forth herein is true and correct. The undersigned agrees to update this information within 14 calendar days of the date Proposer or Contractor knows or reasonably should have known of any defect or changes to this information.

The Contract-Related Disclosure Form and attachments shall be a public record subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act. No confidentiality restrictions shall be placed on information submitted by the Proposer or Contractor.

The undersigned represents and agrees it shall make a representation and warranty as to the continuing accuracy of this information in any final written agreement between it and CalPERS.

---

I, the official named below, acknowledge and declare I have read and understand CCR section 559.1, and that the above-named firm has provided information required by section 559.1 and this Form. I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above-named firm, and declare the foregoing is true and correct as of the date of execution of this document. I further acknowledge my firm's responsibility to provide updates in the event this information is determined to be incorrect or has changed.



6/30/25  
Date

Authorized Signature

Brynne Hovde, Managing Director  
Name and Title

**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Proposal Questionnaire**

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to submit responses and documentation as requested on this questionnaire. The information requested must be provided in the prescribed format; all questions must be repeated in their entirety before the answers are given. Responses that deviate materially from the prescribed format may lead to the rejection of the Proposal.

Document current and planned level of compliance with Revised 508 standards for all deliverables to be provided by the successful Proposer, including any electronic content that may be posted to the CalPERS website. Proposer may document its compliance by providing (a) its policy and procedures for validating the accessibility of electronic content; (b) a narrative description of said policy and procedures; or (c) a written Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) for each Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Standards item that is to be developed, updated, configured for, and delivered to CalPERS. Any documentation provided in responding to this question should be based on the latest version of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) provided by the Industry Technology Industry Council (ITIC).

The response to all questions in the aggregate must be limited to twenty (20) pages maximum. Please note if a submission with more than twenty (20) pages is received only the first twenty (20) pages will be considered for scoring. Provide responses in the order the prompts are listed.

**A. ORGANIZATION and BACKGROUND**  
**(Pass/Fail)**

1. Name of your organization.

The Nova Collective

2. Location of headquarters.

Chicago, IL

3. Location and address of branch which would provide services under this contract.

The Nova Collective, LLC 1819 W Grand Ave, Ste 203 Chicago, IL 60622

Services under this contract will be provided from our headquarters location in Chicago, with team members traveling to CalPERS offices in Sacramento as needed for in-person meetings, presentations, and stakeholder engagement.

4. Number of years your organization has been in business.

The Nova Collective, LLC has been in continuous operation for 8 years, having been founded in 2017.

5. Within the past five (5) years, have there been any significant changes in your organization's ownership, corporate officers, or principal business? If yes, please describe.

No, there have been no significant changes in The Nova Collective's ownership, corporate officers, or principal business within the past five years. The organization has maintained consistent leadership and business focus throughout this period.

6. Mission statement or statement of your organization's principal business. Please provide a copy of incorporation documents or other public documents that describe the primary focus of your firm.

Operating Agreement included in 'Master Copy' File

The Nova Collective's mission is to build inclusive, thriving workplaces through culturally-relevant, tailor-made learning and development programs. We partner with clients to increase employee engagement and workforce skills, cultivate equitable culture, and build leadership capability at scale.

Our principal business is providing comprehensive diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) consulting services, organizational culture assessment and transformation, leadership development, and strategic learning solutions for public sector agencies, nonprofit organizations, higher education institutions, and Fortune 500 companies.

**B. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CONSULTING SERVICES CAPABILITIES  
(Pass/Fail)**

Please provide a summary of the services that your firm provided in the service categories below, in one or multiple of the following business sector(s); public, private, and/or non-profit; in which the work was performed. Clearly explain your experience in all business sector(s) for each category.

1. Providing advisory services on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) best practices.

The Nova Collective has provided comprehensive DEI advisory services across three critical sectors, with particular expertise in board-level governance and fiduciary organizations. Our advisory approach emphasizes sustainable, evidence-based solutions that deliver measurable results within regulatory frameworks and fiduciary responsibilities, as demonstrated through our successful partnerships with highly regulated financial institutions and government agencies.

Our board-level advisory expertise includes work with major financial institutions operating under federal regulatory oversight. For Federal Home Loan Bank Boston and Chicago (2019-2022), we provided direct board advisory services, including facilitated board sessions on equity awareness, governance integration of DEI principles, and strategic planning for cooperative financial institutions. This work included advising on integration with DEI objectives and contextualizing equity within regulated, risk-averse financial environments. Our Federal Reserve Bank engagement (2020-2023) included board and leadership dialogue sessions, talent management advisory, and committee workshops focused on DEI integration.

For the American Statistical Association, we conducted comprehensive advisory work including policy and process audits covering journal documentation, constitution and bylaws review, style guides, awards policies, position descriptions, and other governance documents. This engagement included dedicated listening sessions and strategic recommendations for organizational improvement within professional association governance structures.

We've provided ongoing strategic advisory services to Fortune 500 corporations, including Delta Air Lines and Comcast Corporation. Our multi-year partnerships (ranging from 2018-2024) demonstrate sustained advisory relationships focused on integrating DEI principles into organizational strategy, supplier diversity programs, and governance practices for global operations reaching millions of stakeholders. These engagements have consistently achieved positive satisfaction ratings and measurable improvements in organizational culture metrics.

In the public sector, we serve as strategic advisors to the California Department of Health and Human Services through our partnership with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for the Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (REIB) Statewide Initiative (2022-present). This multi-million dollar engagement includes delivering 300+ training sessions reaching 3,500+ county employees across 29 counties, developing comprehensive operational toolkits, brand guidelines for multi-vendor initiatives, and strategic frameworks that scale statewide equity initiatives while ensuring compliance with California constitutional requirements. Our advisory work with the Village of River Forest demonstrates municipal DEI strategy expertise, including policy review and

inclusive community engagement frameworks that balance equity goals with public sector governance requirements.

In the healthcare and scientific sectors, we have provided specialized DEI advisory services to Ascend Health (healthcare industry learning content and assessments), and ASPET (medical professional association research and strategy). This work includes bias reduction in healthcare communications and evidence-based DEI strategy development for professional associations that directly aligns with CalPERS' Health Equity pillar objectives. Our public sector approach emphasizes sustainable, cost-effective solutions that deliver measurable results within typical government budget parameters, as demonstrated through our successful multi-year California state partnerships.

## 2. Providing education and training on DEI matters to Boards of Trustees.

The Nova Collective has extensive experience delivering comprehensive DEI education and training to boards across financial services, nonprofit, and professional association sectors. Our most significant board education work includes multi-year training programs for Federal Home Loan Bank Boston and Chicago (2019-2022), where we delivered facilitated board training sessions on disability inclusion, global cultural competency, LGBTQ+ inclusion, multigenerational workforce dynamics, and supplier diversity - all viewed through an equity lens.

We developed a comprehensive leadership toolkit specifically designed for Federal Home Loan Bank Boston's board and leadership team to support ongoing diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, along with strategic communications plans to guide board messaging and organizational alignment on DEI priorities. For Federal Reserve Bank (2020-2023), we provided specialized board education through facilitated workshops to the bank's executive committee covering social identity awareness, communicating across difference, bias mitigation strategies, and allyship and bias intervention techniques.

Our work with the American Statistical Association included comprehensive board education focused on preparing board members to understand, articulate, and advocate for ASA's DEI initiatives. This training equipped board members with knowledge about the organization's DEI work, strategic messaging frameworks for external communications, and guidance on effectively responding to stakeholder questions about DEI priorities and investments. The education was designed to prepare board leadership for upcoming organizational changes and provide them with tools to champion DEI work throughout the association.

In the nonprofit sector, our work with Jackson Hole Community Foundation included strategic DEI education and planning for foundation leadership and board members,

focusing on inclusive grantmaking practices, community engagement strategies, and fiduciary responsibility integration with equity principles.

3. Conducting assessments of established DEI programs and produce reports of findings and recommendations.

The Nova Collective has extensive experience conducting comprehensive DEI assessments across all sectors using our proprietary methodologies including the Healthy Community Framework and Belonging Index benchmark. Our assessment methodology combines quantitative survey data with qualitative focus groups and interviews, policy reviews, and benchmarking against industry standards to provide holistic evaluation and actionable recommendations. We emphasize efficiency and value, delivering comprehensive organizational insights through streamlined processes that respect both timeline and budget parameters while maintaining analytical rigor.

Our largest assessment engagement with Comcast Corporation demonstrates our capability to evaluate complex, global organizations with over 80,000 employees. This partnership included evaluation of enterprise-wide DEI initiatives, organizational culture measurement, and strategic recommendations for sustained culture transformation. For Federal Home Loan Bank Chicago, we conducted pre- and post-engagement surveys to measure the effectiveness of DEI programming and organizational culture shifts, providing quantitative evidence of program impact and areas for continued development.

In the public sector, we conducted a complete organizational DEI assessment for the Village of River Forest, including employee surveys, leadership interviews, policy audits, and stakeholder focus groups, resulting in a comprehensive report with actionable recommendations for cultural transformation and inclusive practices. Our ASPET (American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics) engagement demonstrates our expertise in professional association assessment. We designed and implemented a complete DEI sentiment analysis combining quantitative surveys and qualitative focus groups, identifying key organizational strengths (member pride at 92%, belonging at 89%) and improvement opportunities (decision-making transparency at 54%, power dynamics awareness at 59%). Our comprehensive assessment included both research analysis and organizational audit, resulting in strategic recommendations including establishment of baseline metrics, enhanced DEI communication strategies, and creation of specialized subcommittees for awards and publications, membership retention, committee representation, communications, conferences and events, and governance protocols.

In the higher education sector, we conducted a comprehensive organizational assessment for Illinois Institute of Technology that included student surveys, faculty/staff



surveys, leadership interviews, policy and process audits, and development of a strategic DEI roadmap with measurable outcomes and implementation timelines. Our Harvard Business School Connected Community Series included design of a comprehensive post-session evaluation instrument to measure program effectiveness and organizational culture insights.

All assessment reports and findings are delivered in fully accessible formats, including properly tagged PDFs that meet Section 508 compliance standards, alternative text for images and charts, and alternative formats provided as needed to ensure universal access to critical assessment insights.

4. Meeting with Boards of Trustees as part of the assessment and information-gathering process.

The Nova Collective has extensive experience meeting with governing boards to gather organizational insights and understand strategic priorities as part of comprehensive assessment processes across multiple sectors. Our approach to board engagement focuses on understanding organizational priorities from board perspectives, gathering governance insights about DEI integration opportunities, and learning about strategic direction from board leadership. We recognize that boards provide unique organizational perspective on culture, values, and strategic priorities that inform effective DEI strategy development.

In the nonprofit sector, our work with Jackson Hole Community Foundation included direct engagement with foundation leadership and board members during the assessment phase to understand organizational priorities, governance perspectives, and strategic direction for DEI initiatives. These sessions provided critical insights into the foundation's community impact goals and governance approach to equity. Our assessment work with Illinois Institute of Technology included leadership alignment sessions and stakeholder meetings with university leadership to gather comprehensive input on organizational culture, strategic priorities, and DEI integration opportunities across academic and administrative functions.

Our ongoing partnership with Harvard Business School includes direct engagement with institutional leadership, faculty advisory bodies, and administrative leadership teams as part of our comprehensive Connected Community Series assessment process. This work involves collecting organizational culture perspectives from advisory bodies and gathering strategic insights on institutional priorities for inclusive excellence across faculty, staff, and student populations. We have facilitated board-level strategic sessions for corporate clients focused on gathering governance insights about DEI integration into organizational strategy. We develop organizational assessments with board guidance to ensure alignment with governance priorities and have facilitated executive leadership alignment sessions on DEI strategic priorities that require board-level consideration and fiduciary oversight.



5. Meeting with executive leadership as part of the assessment and information-gathering process.

The Nova Collective has extensive experience conducting executive leadership interviews and stakeholder meetings across all sectors as a core component of our assessment methodology. Our approach focuses on gathering insights from C-suite leaders, department heads, senior managers, and advisory committees to understand organizational culture, strategic priorities, and leadership perspectives on DEI integration.

In the public sector, our work with the California Department of Health and Human Services included comprehensive stakeholder briefings and leadership interviews with department heads and senior leadership across multiple agencies, providing insights into complex multi-departmental coordination and statewide strategic priorities. Our Village of River Forest engagement included one-on-one interviews with the village manager, department heads, and elected officials to understand municipal organizational dynamics and leadership perspectives on community engagement and inclusive governance.

Our financial services sector experience includes executive leadership meetings with Federal Home Loan Bank Boston and Chicago senior leadership teams, as well as Federal Reserve Bank executive committee members, gathering strategic insights about regulatory compliance, organizational culture, and DEI integration within highly regulated financial environments. These engagements provided critical understanding of fiduciary responsibilities and governance considerations within federal financial institutions.

In the private sector, we have conducted executive interviews and leadership stakeholder sessions with Fortune 500 companies including Netflix, Delta Air Lines, and Comcast, engaging leaders, department heads, and senior managers to understand organizational culture, strategic priorities, and leadership development needs across global operations. Our Harvard Business School Connected Community Series includes extensive executive leadership consultation with department heads and administrative leadership on organizational culture transformation, strategic DEI integration, and governance alignment.

Our ASPET engagement included leadership interviews and stakeholder consultation with scientific and medical profession leaders to understand organizational dynamics and strategic priorities for advancing equity within professional medical associations. In the nonprofit sector, our assessments for organizations like Jackson Hole Community Foundation included extensive executive leadership interviews to gather insights on organizational culture, community impact, and strategic DEI integration opportunities within foundation governance structures.

6. Preparing an action plan aligned to organizational core values and assessment findings.

The Nova Collective specializes in translating assessment insights into actionable strategic plans aligned with organizational values and culture. Our approach prioritizes accessibility and value delivery, ensuring that high-quality DEI consulting is available to public sector organizations regardless of budget constraints. We believe effective culture change requires sustained partnership rather than expensive, short-term interventions, with action plans designed for practical implementation within public sector resource constraints, ensuring recommendations are achievable and sustainable rather than aspirational.

Our most comprehensive action plan implementation is demonstrated through our partnership with the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for the Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (REIB) Statewide Initiative. Following extensive assessment and stakeholder engagement, we developed and implemented a multi-million dollar action plan reaching over 3,500 social services workers across 29 counties through 250+ in-person learning sessions, 50+ virtual sessions, and 14 multi-day train-the-trainer workshops. This action plan included the creation of 6 operational toolkits and 100+ pages of custom digital content to support ongoing equity implementation across all state counties, featuring strategic implementation guides, microlearning modules, job aids, and community-building tools that ensure long-term sustainability and adoption alongside supplemental video guides. The action plan emphasized leadership readiness, inclusive decision-making, social determinants of health, and equity-centered service delivery through immersive learning experiences, scenario-based practice, and professional development programming.

In municipal government, following our comprehensive assessment of the Village of River Forest, we developed a tailored action plan that included specific recommendations for interdepartmental communication improvement, inclusive hiring practices, leadership development programming, and community engagement strategies, all aligned with the village's core values of transparency, service, and community connection. Our higher education sector work with Illinois Institute of Technology resulted in a complete strategic DEI roadmap that included specific learning objectives, implementation timelines, measurement strategies, and resource allocation recommendations aligned with the university's academic mission and institutional values.

Our Harvard Business School Connected Community Series demonstrates our ability to develop action plans for complex institutional environments, creating a 7-part instructor-led learning series designed to reach entire campus communities, across student, faculty, and staff, with practical implementation strategies for improving collaboration, communication, and inclusive learning environments. For our ASPET

engagement, we developed strategic action plans focused on establishing baseline metrics, enhanced DEI communication strategies, and the creation of specialized subcommittees across awards and publications, membership retention, committee representation, communications, conferences and events, and governance protocols.

In the private sector, we have developed action plans for corporate clients including Netflix, Delta Air Lines, and Comcast that integrate DEI initiatives with business objectives, operational realities, and organizational culture. Our ongoing work includes strategic planning that aligns DEI initiatives with companies' core values and operational excellence standards. Our action plans consistently address fiduciary considerations and governance integration, as evidenced in our work with Federal Home Loan Banks and other organizations managing significant assets and investment portfolios, ensuring DEI initiatives align with fiduciary responsibilities and regulatory compliance requirements.

Action plans are developed using accessible document standards and universal design principles, ensuring all stakeholders—regardless of accessibility needs—can fully engage with strategic recommendations and implementation guidance. This includes properly structured documents, alternative text for visual elements, and multiple format options to accommodate diverse accessibility requirements that support inclusive implementation across diverse organizational contexts.

#### 7. Conducting DEI best practices research and provide analysis and reports.

The Nova Collective conducts comprehensive research and analysis using both primary and secondary research methodologies across all sectors. Our research methodology includes environmental scanning, peer organization analysis, literature review, and benchmarking to provide comprehensive analysis and evidence-based recommendations that inform strategic decision-making and organizational transformation.

Our ASPET research project demonstrates our specialized capability in scientific and medical professional organization research, where we conducted comprehensive quantitative and qualitative analysis investigating sentiment around inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility among medical professionals. This research included survey methodology, focus group facilitation, data analysis, and development of actionable recommendations for advancing equity within scientific and medical professional communities. The research identified key organizational strengths including high levels of member pride (92%) and belonging (89%), while revealing critical improvement opportunities in decision-making transparency (54%) and power dynamics awareness (59%), leading to strategic recommendations for enhanced communication strategies and governance protocol development.

In the public sector, our work includes analyzing best practices for government agencies, including research on inclusive supervision practices, bias reduction strategies, and equity-centered policy development. Our California Department of Health and Human

Services engagement through the CDSS REIB Statewide Initiative includes ongoing research and analysis of statewide equity initiatives and best practices for large-scale public sector DEI implementation. This research informs the development of evidence-based training content, operational toolkits, and strategic frameworks that ensure constitutional compliance while advancing equity goals across diverse county populations and service delivery contexts.

Our financial services sector research includes analysis of regulatory compliance frameworks, fiduciary responsibility integration with DEI principles, and governance best practices for cooperative financial institutions. Through our work with Federal Home Loan Banks, we conducted research on equity integration within highly regulated, risk-averse organizational environments, providing analysis and recommendations for board governance, leadership development, and organizational culture transformation that aligns with federal oversight requirements.

In the higher education sector, we have conducted research on inclusive teaching practices, student support strategies, and institutional DEI frameworks, providing analysis and recommendations based on current literature and emerging best practices in educational equity. Our Harvard Business School research includes analysis of community building strategies, faculty engagement approaches, and institutional culture transformation methodologies that inform comprehensive programming design and implementation strategies.

In the nonprofit sector, our research includes analysis of inclusive grantmaking practices, community engagement strategies, and organizational culture development for mission-driven organizations. Our work with Jackson Hole Community Foundation included research on regional equity strategies, foundation governance best practices, and community impact measurement that balances organizational mission alignment with equity advancement goals.

Our research approach consistently emphasizes practical application and implementation feasibility, ensuring that analysis and recommendations translate into actionable strategies that organizations can successfully adopt within their operational and resource constraints while achieving measurable culture change outcomes.

#### 8. Advising on best practices in procurement.

The Nova Collective has provided comprehensive procurement best practices guidance with particular emphasis on supplier diversity strategy development, educational content creation, and inclusive procurement process enhancement across financial services and corporate sectors.

Our Federal Home Loan Bank Chicago engagement included development of comprehensive supplier diversity educational content as part of their broader organizational DEI initiative. We created training materials that guided employees

through inclusive procurement processes, explaining diverse vendor definitions, sourcing procedures, and the business case for supplier diversity. This content emphasized practical implementation strategies including diverse vendor identification, competitive selection processes, and partnership development with diversity councils and certification organizations.

For Bayer Corporation, we developed and implemented a comprehensive supplier diversity spotlight program designed to increase visibility and access for diverse suppliers while raising the profile of Bayer's supplier diversity program within the broader organization. This engagement included conducting interviews with diverse suppliers to understand their experiences and success stories, providing strategic insights on supplier relationship development, and creating educational materials including detailed classification guides and one-page resources explaining Women Business Enterprise (WBE), Veteran Business Enterprise (VBE), and Small Business Enterprise (SBE) certifications. Our work included stakeholder engagement strategies to connect procurement teams with successful diverse suppliers and develop internal awareness of supplier diversity benefits and opportunities.

Through our extensive experience as a certified Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) navigating complex procurement processes, including our role as subcontractor on the \$4+ million California Department of Health & Human Services CDSS REIB Statewide Initiative, we bring practical understanding of procurement challenges from the vendor perspective. This experience informs our ability to advise organizations on removing barriers for diverse vendors, developing inclusive RFP language, and creating procurement processes that advance equity goals while maintaining operational efficiency and regulatory compliance.

Our procurement advisory approach emphasizes practical implementation strategies that organizations can adopt within existing procurement frameworks while achieving meaningful supplier diversity improvements. We focus on education and awareness building, process enhancement rather than complete system overhaul, and development of sustainable supplier diversity programs that deliver measurable outcomes and community economic development benefits.

#### 9. Advising on best practices in hiring.

The Nova Collective provides comprehensive hiring best practices consultation across all sectors, focusing on bias reduction, inclusive recruitment strategies, and equitable selection processes. Our approach emphasizes systematic integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles throughout the entire hiring lifecycle, from job description development through candidate evaluation and selection.

Our most comprehensive hiring best practices work is demonstrated through the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) REIB Statewide Initiative, where we

developed a complete Staff Development Lifecycle Toolkit encompassing recruitment, hiring, onboarding, performance management, and succession planning. This toolkit provides detailed guidance on benchmarking and focus area establishment, inclusive job description development, bias reduction in interview processes, scorecard development for objective candidate evaluation, and accountability metrics for measuring recruitment effectiveness. The toolkit includes specific frameworks for removing barriers in hiring processes, eliminating coded language from job descriptions, and implementing "culture add" rather than "culture fit" evaluation criteria. Alongside this toolkit, we also developed a supplemental video with captions and audio descriptions to guide staff and county workers through the toolkit, ensuring video accessibility compliance with Section 508 standards.

We have developed hiring toolkits and provided inclusive hiring manager training for multiple organizations including Sally Beauty, Half Acre Brewing Company, Chong and Koster, PMG, and Civitas. These engagements include creation of bias-aware evaluation frameworks, inclusive interview protocols, and equitable candidate assessment processes that expand candidate pools while maintaining quality standards. Our hiring manager training focuses on unconscious bias awareness, objective feedback methodologies, and inclusive interviewing techniques that ensure fair evaluation across diverse candidate pools.

Our job description audit services demonstrate our expertise in removing bias from hiring materials. We have conducted comprehensive job description reviews for Brenntag, Talbots, WE Communications, Equivant, Colorado Medical Society, Valorem Reply, and Civitas, focusing on eliminating gendered language, reducing unnecessary qualification requirements, incorporating lived experience as valuable expertise, and developing accessible, inclusive language that welcomes diverse candidates while clearly communicating role expectations and organizational values.

In the public sector, our work includes advising government agencies on inclusive hiring practices that comply with legal requirements while advancing diversity and equity goals. Our Village of River Forest engagement included specific recommendations for bias-aware recruitment, inclusive interview processes, and equitable candidate evaluation strategies that balance municipal transparency requirements with diversity advancement objectives. Our Federal Home Loan Bank partnerships included hiring best practices guidance within regulated financial environments, addressing both compliance requirements and inclusive recruitment goals.

Our hiring advisory approach emphasizes practical implementation strategies including development of measurable accountability metrics, creation of sustainable evaluation processes, and integration of accessibility considerations throughout hiring workflows. We focus on building organizational capacity for inclusive hiring through training programs, toolkit development, and ongoing consultation that ensures hiring practices



advance both equity goals and operational effectiveness while maintaining legal compliance and organizational efficiency.

10. Advising on best practices in healthcare delivery equity and accessibility.

The Nova Collective has extensive experience advising on healthcare delivery equity and accessibility through our comprehensive work across public sector agencies, healthcare industry partnerships, and medical professional organizations that directly impact health outcomes for diverse populations.

Our most significant healthcare equity work includes our multi-year partnership with the California Department of Health and Human Services through the CDSS REIB Statewide Initiative, where we have delivered 250+ in-person learning sessions and 50+ virtual sessions reaching 3,500+ county employees across 29 counties. While these county workers primarily serve CalWorks and CalFresh participants rather than being direct healthcare providers, their work addresses critical social determinants of health including housing stability, food security, employment access, and economic mobility that directly impact health outcomes for vulnerable populations. Our training emphasizes equity-centered service delivery, culturally responsive supervision practices, bias reduction strategies, and inclusive decision-making that improves access to services addressing social determinants of health.

Our comprehensive work with Ascend Health demonstrates our specialized expertise in healthcare content and communications equity. We developed and delivered training sessions on social identity and bias for healthcare content creators, created a comprehensive DEIB toolkit specifically designed for professionals creating educational materials for healthcare providers, and conducted an audit of their creative assets through an equity lens. This work included developing frameworks to address medical racism, ableism, homophobia, and gender bias in healthcare communications, with specific guidance on eliminating health disparities through improved representation and inclusive practices in healthcare content and educational materials.

Our ASPET (American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics) engagement demonstrates our expertise in advancing equity within medical and scientific professional organizations. We conducted comprehensive research and analysis investigating sentiment around inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility among medical professionals, providing data-driven assessment methodology and actionable insights for advancing equity within scientific and medical professional communities that directly influence healthcare delivery and patient outcomes.

Our healthcare equity advisory work extends beyond direct service delivery to address systemic barriers and organizational culture change within institutions serving populations with significant health disparities. Through our work with organizations

serving disadvantaged populations, we provide strategic consultation on health equity initiatives, policy review for inclusive service delivery, and development of comprehensive training programs that support professionals in providing culturally responsive, bias-free services that improve health outcomes across diverse communities.

Our approach consistently emphasizes practical implementation strategies that organizations can adopt within existing frameworks while achieving meaningful improvements in healthcare delivery equity, access, and outcomes for historically marginalized and underserved populations.

11. Advising on the inclusion of diversity best practices in the investment industry.

The Nova Collective has provided comprehensive advisory services on diversity best practices in investment and financial services contexts through our work with foundation clients, corporate finance functions, and financial institutions managing significant asset portfolios.

Our most extensive investment industry DEI work includes our partnership with Jackson Hole Community Foundation, where we developed a comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion Working Group Charter and Toolkit that specifically addresses investment practices through an equity lens. We advised on integrating social impact investing principles into their investment strategy, focusing on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria that prioritize diversity and inclusion outcomes. Our work included establishing frameworks for evaluating investments through a diversity and inclusion lens, ensuring that investment decisions align with the foundation's DEI values and community impact goals.

We developed specific guidance for appointing dedicated oversight of investments through a diversity and inclusion lens, including protocols for remaining current on social impact investing trends and ensuring that diversity and inclusion considerations are prioritized in investment evaluation processes using Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria. This approach ensures that diversity and inclusion remain central considerations in investment decision-making while maintaining fiduciary responsibility and financial performance objectives.

In the corporate sector, our work with Fortune 500 companies including has included advisory services on diverse vendor selection, integration of DEI principles into various business functions including finance, and guidance on creating inclusive environments for employees across different departments and functions.

Our financial services sector experience includes work with Federal Home Loan Banks, where we provided DEI advisory services within highly regulated financial environments that manage cooperative investment portfolios and complex asset management responsibilities. This work demonstrates our understanding of investment industry



governance requirements, fiduciary responsibilities, and regulatory compliance considerations that must be balanced with diversity and inclusion advancement goals.

Our investment industry advisory approach emphasizes practical implementation strategies that financial institutions and investment organizations can adopt within existing regulatory frameworks while achieving meaningful diversity improvements in investment committee composition, asset manager selection, and investment decision-making processes that advance both financial returns and community impact objectives.

12. Advising on DEI best practices for public sector organizations that are consistent with federal and state law, including Section 31 of Article I of the California Constitution (commonly known as "Proposition 209").

The Nova Collective has extensive experience advising public sector organizations on DEI initiatives that comply with federal and state legal requirements, including California's Proposition 209. Our deep expertise in California legal compliance is evidenced by our successful multi-year partnership with the California Department of Health & Human Services, where all programming, materials, and strategic recommendations undergo rigorous legal review for Proposition 209 compliance.

Our most comprehensive demonstration of Proposition 209 compliant DEI work is the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) REIB Statewide Initiative, where we have delivered 250+ in-person learning sessions and 50+ virtual sessions reaching 3,500+ county employees across 29 counties. All training content, facilitation guides, and strategic frameworks were extensively reviewed by state legal counsel and modified as needed to ensure constitutional compliance. We received specific guidance on taboo language and compliant terminology, which we integrated throughout all program materials and delivery methods.

Our approach focuses on race-neutral strategies that promote inclusive environments while advancing equity goals within legal constraints. Rather than using race-specific language, we emphasize social identity frameworks that encompass all forms of marginalization, including socioeconomic factors, geographic diversity, first-generation status, and other legally permissible approaches. Our training content addresses social determinants of health and systemic barriers without relying on racial categorizations, instead focusing on bias reduction strategies and inclusive practices that benefit all participants.

We have developed comprehensive frameworks for Proposition 209 compliant language and methodologies that have been successfully implemented across state agencies. Our training methodology emphasizes individual bias awareness through social identity exploration, historical context understanding, and practical bias interruption tools rather

than race-specific discussions. We focus on "improving outcomes for all program participants" and "removing barriers for all employees" while still achieving meaningful equity improvements.

Our REIB training curriculum demonstrates compliant approaches through key elements including focus on social identity rather than specific racial categories, emphasis on individual bias and decision-making rather than systemic racism discussions, historical context that addresses multiple forms of discrimination affecting all marginalized groups, and practical bias disruption frameworks that apply to all forms of prejudice and discrimination. We frame equity work within constitutional boundaries by focusing on creating inclusive environments that serve diverse populations effectively while ensuring equal treatment for all individuals.

Our extensive California public sector experience includes developing compliant assessment methodologies, strategic recommendations, and training content that advances diversity, equity, and inclusion goals while ensuring full legal compliance. We advise on developing inclusive policies and practices through focus on bias reduction, barrier removal, and equitable access strategies that comply with legal requirements while achieving meaningful organizational culture change.

Our measurement approaches align with legal requirements by focusing on engagement metrics, inclusive practice adoption, and bias reduction indicators rather than demographic-specific outcomes, ensuring all evaluation strategies maintain constitutional compliance while demonstrating program effectiveness and organizational improvement.

### 13. Developing communication strategies highlighting the importance of DEI.

The Nova Collective has developed comprehensive communication strategies for DEI initiatives across all sectors, utilizing our dedicated communications and implementation expertise to ensure successful programming and sustained organizational engagement.

Our most extensive communication strategy work includes the California Department of Health and Human Services CDSS REIB Statewide Initiative, where we developed comprehensive brand guidelines for multi-vendor coordination across a three-year, multi-million dollar program. We created a complete communication ecosystem including brand assets designed to meet accessibility requirements for all vendors, marketing communications templates, one-page program overviews, and email marketing campaigns. We also supported the development of an entire web-based registration and tracking system used across all vendors to ensure consistent messaging and participant engagement throughout the statewide initiative.

We developed a specialized Communication Guidance Toolkit for Social and Current Events that provides county organizations with frameworks for responding to societal events, crisis communication protocols, and strategies for both internal and external

stakeholder engagement. This toolkit includes guidance for issuing statements, measuring communication success, establishing communication cascades, and ensuring trauma-informed approaches to sensitive topics. The toolkit demonstrates our expertise in developing communication strategies that balance organizational values with legal compliance and community sensitivity.

Our multimedia content creation includes animated videos, 100+ pages of custom digital content comprising four comprehensive staff toolkits (staff development, inclusive language guide, equitable decision assessment, and communications guidance), and supplemental video content with accessibility features including captions and audio descriptions. These materials were integrated into email campaigns and web-based systems to maximize reach and engagement across diverse county populations.

In the private sector, we have developed communication strategies for Fortune 500 companies including Delta Air Lines, Comcast, Harvard Business School, and others, creating enterprise-wide DEI communication programs that include messaging for leadership alignment, employee engagement campaigns, and external stakeholder communication about organizational DEI commitments. Our Delta Air Lines external communications plan demonstrates our ability to develop sophisticated media strategies, Q&A frameworks for leadership spokespeople, and targeted outreach to industry-specific reporters and stakeholders.

Our communication strategy development includes stakeholder mapping, message development and testing, multi-channel communication planning, feedback loop creation, and measurement strategies to assess communication effectiveness and engagement levels across diverse audiences. We specialize in creating cohesive visual and operational communications frameworks that ensure consistent messaging across complex multi-vendor initiatives while maintaining accessibility compliance and meeting Section 508 standards for universal access.

Our approach consistently integrates accessibility compliance into all communication materials, ensuring content meets WCAG 2.0 AA requirements through accessible design for digital content, alternative formats for print materials, and inclusive communication methods that reach all stakeholders effectively, regardless of accessibility needs or assistive technology requirements.



## **DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION**

CalPERS Board of Administration requires contract participation from certified Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs) in its contract process, unless specifically exempted. Only State of California, Office of Small Business and DVBE Services (OSDS) may certify a DVBE. The DVBE must perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation to be considered compliant with the DVBE program requirements. In order to obtain DVBE incentive participation credit, the contractor must be a certified DVBE **or** subcontract with a DVBE, certified by OSDS, **no later than** the Final Filing Date as specified in the Schedule of Events.

**Please read the following requirements carefully. Completion of this document is required regardless of intent to pursue DVBE incentive participation.**

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this DVBE incentive participation, the following definitions apply:

- A. *Disabled veteran*** means a veteran of the military, naval, or air services of the United States with a **service-connected disability of ten percent or more**, who is a resident of the State of California.
- B. *DVBE*** means a business concern certified by OSDS as meeting all of the following:
  - 1. A sole proprietorship at least 51 percent owned by one or more disabled veterans; or in the case of a publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of its stock is owned by one or more disabled veterans; a subsidiary which is wholly owned by a parent corporation, but only if at least 51 percent of the voting stock of the parent corporation is owned by one or more disabled veterans; or a joint venture in which at least 51 percent of the joint venture's management and control and earnings are held by one or more disabled veterans.
  - 2. The management and control of the daily business operations are by one or more disabled veterans. The disabled veterans who exercise management and control are not required to be the same disabled veterans as the owners of the business concern.
  - 3. It is a sole proprietorship, corporation, or partnership with its home office located in the United States, which is not a branch or subsidiary of a foreign corporation, foreign firm, or other foreign based business.



**Note:** View certification information at <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/PD/About/Page-Content/PD-Branch-Intro-Accordion-List/OSDS/OSDS> or contact the OSDS at (916) 375-4940.

**C. *Commercially Useful Function*** A DVBE contractor, subcontractors, or supplier is considered performing a commercially useful function when it meets all of the following criteria:

1. The business concern is:
  - (a) Responsible for the execution of a distinct element of the work of the contract;
  - (b) Carries out its obligation by actually performing, managing, or supervising the work involved;
  - (c) Performs work that is normal for its business, services and function; and
2. The business concern is not further subcontracting a greater portion of the work that is greater than would be expected by normal industry practices.

A contractor, subcontractor, or supplier will not be considered to perform a commercially useful function if the contractor's, subcontractor's, or supplier's role is limited to that of an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of small business, microbusiness, or DVBE participation. When subcontracting to small, micro, or DVBE subcontractors, the intent is for the subcontractor to provide goods or services required for the performance of the contract rather than artificial or incidental participation that provides an "appearance" of participation to meet the socio-economic objectives of these programs.

## **II. DVBE PARTICIPATION OPTIONS AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be **responsive** to the incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation and select one of the following options:

- A. **Option A – DVBE Incentive.** A bidder may submit DVBE participation percentages to receive and qualify for the incentive program. Bids that fail to submit the required form and confirm the level of DVBE participation will not be eligible to receive the DVBE incentive. **Refer to RFP, Section V Proposal Requirements, A(8) Technical Proposal/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation and Incentive.**
- B. **Option B- No DVBE Incentive Participation.** A bidder may opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

#### **USE/SUBSTITUTION OF PROPOSED DVBE**

If awarded the contract, the successful bidder must use the DVBE subcontractor and/or supplier proposed in their final bid/proposal unless the contractor requests substitution via prior written notice to CalPERS and CalPERS approves such substitution. At a minimum, the request must include:

- A. A written explanation for the substitution;
- B. The identity of the person or firm substituted;
- C. Any change in the work or dollar/percentage amount caused by the substitution; and
- D. A revised DVBE Contract Participation (Attachment G, Exhibit 1) and applicable certification(s).

The request and CalPERS approval or disapproval of the substitution shall not affect compliance with any other provision of law, or any other contract requirements relating to substitution of subcontractors.

### **III. QUESTIONS**

The information below is provided to answer commonly asked questions and clarify potential misconceptions of the contract participation goal requirement. If further clarification is necessary, you may contact CalPERS Contracts Officer at (916) 795-3020 or [ossd\\_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov](mailto:ossd_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov) for assistance.

#### **Meeting the Goal**

- 1. Proposing incentive goal attainment is a commitment to use disabled veteran business enterprises for the established percent of the contract amount. If awarded a contract, CalPERS expects the DVBE subcontractors or suppliers to be utilized as identified in your proposal, unless a substitution is approved by CalPERS.
- 2. An expression of intent to subcontract with unidentified DVBE firms at some future date is insufficient to comply with DVBE incentive participation. Commitments must be finalized upon submission of your contract participation documentation to CalPERS.
- 3. **Out-of-state firms** are not excluded from participating in the DVBE incentive program. To do business with CalPERS, completion of this document is required for all bidders.



### DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

In order to be responsive to incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation. Check the appropriate box to indicate the option with which you choose to comply. Please read all instructions carefully prior to completing this form. **Only California certified DVBEs who perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation may be used to satisfy the DVBE program requirements.**

This solicitation does **not** have a DVBE participation requirement; however, you may still commit to an incentive percentage to obtain preference points.

- ☐ **Option A** - I commit to the percent listed below to qualify for the DVBE incentive program.
- ☐ 1% - 1.99%
  - ☐ 2% - 2.99%
  - ☐ 3% - 3.99%
  - ☐ 4% - 4.99%
  - ☐ 5% or Over
- x **Option B** - I opt out of participating in the DVBE incentive program.

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**In order to meet the DVBE participation requirement, list one or more DVBE vendors and the work to be performed.**

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

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California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9375

Attachment G, Exhibit 1

Page 3 of 3

- ☐ I commit to utilizing one or more of the DVBEs listed above in order to meet the total claimed DVBE% indicated, and certify that the DVBE vendor(s) listed above have been notified and agree to provide services for this contract.

Total DVBE % \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- 
- ☒ I opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_

6/30/2025

### List of Proposed Subcontractors

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this attachment. Please check the applicable box. (A photo copy of this form is acceptable if additional sheets are required.)

- ☒ No subcontractors will be used.
- ☐ No subcontractors will be used other than the DVBE firms identified on Attachment G, Exhibit 1.
- ☐ The following subcontractors will be employed and will perform the work or services identified below.
- ☐ Non-small business preference to be applied by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.

---

Company Name:

Contact Name:

Telephone Number:

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:

---

Company Name:

Contact Name:

Telephone Number:

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:

---

1 If your firm is claiming the non-small business preference by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.



**Required Attachments Certification Checklist**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420**

Firm's Name: The Nova Collective

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this Attachment. Complete the "Proposer Certification" column and submit this checklist to confirm the items submitted with your Proposal. CalPERS staff will use the shaded "CalPERS Verification" column to confirm receipt of all required documents.

| Attachment Name/Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Proposer Certification               | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted Cover Letter signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.<br>a. A statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer good for 180 calendar days.<br>b. A statement expressing the Proposer's willingness to perform the services as described in this RFP.<br>c. A statement expressing the Proposer's availability of staff and other required resources for performing all services and providing all deliverables as described in the RFP. | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment of Proposal packages as specified in the RFP.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF marked " <b>Master Copy</b> " containing original signatures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment marked " <b>Reproduction Copy.</b> " All pages containing proprietary information should be removed and a cover sheet must be included which provides:<br>1. the firm's names;<br>2. total number of pages; and<br>3. identification of all pages removed due to proprietary information.<br><b>Note: Entire proposal may not be marked confidential and proprietary.</b>                                                                                               | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Minimum Qualifications Certification (Attachment A) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Proposal/Proposer Certification Sheet (Attachment B) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.<br>Small Business certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes      x No<br>DVBE certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes      x No<br>Micro Business certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes      x No                                                                                                                                                                  | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment I

Page 2 of 3

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                      |                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration (Attachment C) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contracting Act Declarations (Attachment D) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contract-Related Disclosure Form (Attachment E) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Proposal Questionnaire (Attachment F)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation (Attachment G, including Exhibit 1)</p> <p>Option A - Meets DVBE Participation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No<br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option B - DVBE Incentive Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No<br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option C – Elected no DVBE participation? x Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Option D – California Certified Micro Business? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No</p> | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>List of Proposed Subcontractors (Attachment H) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Required Attachments Certification Checklist (Attachment I)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Joint Venture proposal?</p> <p>If yes, was documentation submitted describing the responsibilities of each party in the Joint Venture, Exhibit 1? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br>x No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Preference Program request?</p> <p>Small Business Preference claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No</p> <p>Target Area Contract Preference Act claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br>x No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Is the Corporation registered and in good standing to do business? x Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Submit current copy of a Secretary of State Certification or Business License</p> <p>(Check the California Secretary of State website at <a href="https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business">https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business</a> to verify status)</p> <p>Is the company an LLP? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes x No</p>                        | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted the Fee Proposal (Attachment J) in a separate document in the Proposal package email. Fee Proposal clearly labeled as "FEE PROPOSAL FOR RFP NO. 2024-9375, submitted by [YOUR COMPANY NAME]."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | x Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

| Verifications Performed by CalPERS Staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Has Contractor been decertified by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing?<br>(Check the California Regulatory Notice Register at <a href="https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/">https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/</a> ) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of CalPERS Reviewer



**OPERATING AGREEMENT FOR  
NOVA COLLECTIVE LLC**  
An Illinois Limited Liability Company

THIS OPERATING AGREEMENT is made as of the \_\_\_\_ day of January, 2017 by and among the signatories identified on the signature pages hereto.

**1. FORMATION OF COMPANY**

Formation of Company. The initial Members hereby agree that the Company shall exist as a Limited Liability Company under and pursuant to the provisions of the Limited Liability Company Act, and agree that the rights, duties, and liabilities of all Members of the Company shall be as provided in the Act, except as otherwise provided herein.

**2. NAME**

The name of the limited liability company shall be "Nova Collective LLC." The company may, from time to time, as decided upon by the Managers, operate and brand itself under the name "Nova."

**3. PURPOSE**

The purpose for which the limited liability company is formed is the transaction of any or all lawful business for which Limited Liability Companies may be organized under this Act.

**4. REGISTERED OFFICE AND AGENT**

The name of the registered agent of the limited liability company shall be Brynne Hovde. The registered office of the limited liability company shall be located at 1137 Wisconsin Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois 60304.

**5. PRINCIPAL PLACE OF BUSINESS**

The principal place of business of the limited liability company shall be located at 1137 Wisconsin Avenue, Oak Park, Illinois 60304.

**6. FILING OF ARTICLES OF ORGANIZATION**

The member(s) of the limited liability company shall:

- (a) promptly file a duly executed original copy of the Articles of Organization of the limited liability company, together with one or more additional copies thereof as appropriate, with the Secretary of State of Illinois (the "**Secretary**") and in such other place or places as may be required by law; and
- (b) tender and pay all fees, charges and do all other things requisite for the due formation of the limited liability company pursuant to the laws of the State of Illinois.

## **7. TERM**

The limited liability company shall be deemed formed at the time of the filing of the Articles of Organization with the Secretary and shall continue for perpetuity, unless sooner terminated pursuant to the further provisions of these Articles.

## **8. NAMES OF MEMBERS**

Members of Company. The names of the initial Members of the Company are set forth on the signature page of this Agreement. Additional Members of the Company hereafter shall be indicated on a separate signature page, as amended or restated from time to time.

## **9. DESIGNATION OF MANAGERS**

For the purpose of conducting the business and affairs of the limited liability company, Brynne Hovde, Tiffany Hudson, and Rebecca Stahl shall act as managers. This Company shall be managed by the Managers.

## **10. RIGHTS AND POWERS OF THE MANAGERS**

10.1 The managers shall have sole and complete control of the management and operation of the affairs and business of the limited liability company.

10.2 In addition to the specific rights and powers herein granted to the managers, the managers shall possess and may enjoy and exercise all of the rights and powers of managers as provided in the Act.

10.3 The limited liability company shall, to the fullest extent permitted by law, indemnify, defend and save harmless the managers and former manager(s) from any and all claims, actions, causes of action, suits, proceedings, losses, damage, liability, costs and expenses (including, without limitation, attorneys' fees and expenses, and court costs) asserted against or incurred or sustained by them by reason of any act performed by them while manager or any omission on their part while manager to act for or in behalf of the limited liability company and in furtherance of its interest provided that the manager(s) acted in good faith and in a manner the manager(s) reasonably believed to be in, or not opposed to, the best interest of the limited liability company and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reason to believe that their conduct was unlawful.

10.4 The managers shall not be liable for any mistakes in judgment or for any inadvertent failure to perform any of its obligations hereunder, or for any loss due to such mistake or failure to perform, or due to the negligence, dishonesty, fraud or bad faith of any employee or other agent of the limited liability company.

10.5 Unless not required by applicable law, the identification "LLC" shall appear after the name of the limited liability company on all correspondence, stationery, checks, invoices and any and all documents and papers executed by the limited liability company.

10.6 In the absence of either manager, Power of Attorney may be used to conduct any and all affairs and business of the limited liability company.

## **11. MEETING OF MEMBERS**

11.1 Meetings. Meetings of the Members of the Company as a whole, for any purpose or purposes, may be called by any Member or Members of the Company.

11.2 Place of Meetings. The Members may designate any place, either within or outside the State of Illinois, as the place of meeting for any meeting of the Members. If a designation is not made, or if a special meeting be otherwise called, the place of meeting shall be the principal place of business of the Company.

11.3 Notice of Meetings. Except as provided in Section 11.4, written notice stating the place, day and hour of the meeting and the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called shall be delivered not less than five nor more than thirty days before the date of the meeting, either personally, by mail or by electronic mail, by or at the direction of the Members or Member calling the meeting, to each Member entitled to vote at such meeting. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered two calendar days after being deposited in the United States mail, addressed to the Member at its address as it appears on the books of the Company, with postage thereon prepaid.

11.4 Meeting of All Members. If all the Members associated with a Series shall meet at any time and place, either within or outside the State of Illinois, or participate in a teleconference meeting, and consent to the holding of a meeting at such time and place or by teleconference, such meeting shall be valid without call or notice, and at such meeting lawful action may be taken.

11.5 Record Date. For the purpose of determining Members entitled to notice of or to vote at any meeting of Members or any adjournment thereof, or Members entitled to receive payment of any distribution, or in order to make a determination of Members for any other purpose, the day immediately prior to the date on which notice of the meeting is mailed or the day immediately prior to the date on which the resolution declaring such distribution is adopted, as the case may be, shall be the record date for such determination of Members. When a determination of Members entitled to vote at any meeting of Members has been made as provided in this Section 11.5, such determination shall apply to any adjournment thereof.

11.6 Quorum. Members holding at least sixty percent of all Percentage Interests of the Company as a whole, represented in person or by proxy, shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of Members of the Company as a whole. In the absence of a quorum at any such meeting, Members holding a majority of the Percentage Interests so represented may adjourn the meeting from time to time for a period not to exceed sixty days without further notice. However, if the adjournment is for more than sixty days, or if after the adjournment a new record date is fixed for the adjourned meeting, a notice of the adjourned meeting shall be given to each Member of record entitled to vote at the meeting. At such adjourned meeting at which a quorum shall be present or represented, any business may be transacted which might have been transacted at the meeting as originally noticed. The Members present at a duly organized meeting may continue to transact business until adjournment, notwithstanding the withdrawal during such meeting of that number of Percentage Interests whose absence would cause less than a quorum.



11.7 Manner of Acting. If a quorum is present, the affirmative vote of Members holding a Majority Interest in such Series shall be the act of the Members, unless the vote of a greater or lesser proportion or number is otherwise required by the Act or expressly by this Agreement. Only Members associated with a Series may vote or consent upon any matter, and their vote or consent, as the case may be, shall be counted in the determination of whether the matter was approved by the Members associated with a meeting of a Series.

11.8 Proxies. At all meetings of Members, a Member may vote in person or by proxy executed in writing by the Member or by a duly authorized attorney-in-fact. Such proxy shall be filed with the Managers associated with the meeting before or at the time of the meeting. No proxy shall be valid after eleven months from the date of its execution, unless otherwise provided in the proxy. A proxy may only be given verbally during a meeting taking place by teleconferencing and shall expire at the termination of said teleconference.

11.9 Action by Members without a Meeting. Action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of Members associated with a Series may be taken without a meeting and without prior notice if written consents of Members associated with such Series are received representing the minimum number of votes that would be necessary to authorize or take such action at a meeting at which all Members of such Series were present and voted.

11.10 Waiver of Notice. When any notice is required to be given to any Member, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the Member entitled to such notice, whether before, at, or after the time stated therein, or the participation in a teleconference meeting, shall be equivalent to the giving of such notice.

## **12. CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACCOUNTS**

12.1 Initial Loans. Each original Managing Member to this Agreement shall make an initial loan to the Company in accordance with Exhibit B, at the time of each Manager's execution of this Agreement. These initial loans shall be repaid by the Company upon such date that the Company reaches a positive cash flow.

12.2 Additional Contributions. If, at any time or times hereafter, the Managers shall determine that additional capital is required by the Company, the Managers shall determine the amount of such additional capital and the anticipated time such additional capital will be required or whether such additional capital shall be provided by the Members by way of additional Capital Contributions or by way of loans from Members. No Member shall be obligated, at any time, to guarantee or otherwise assume or become liable for any obligations of the Company or to make any additional Capital Contributions advances or loans to the Company, unless such obligations are specifically accepted and agreed to by such Member.

## **13. ALLOCATIONS AND DISTRIBUTIONS**

13.1 Allocations of Profits and Losses. Profits and Losses, after deducting Guaranteed Payments, shall be allocated among the Members in proportion to their Percentage Ownership Interests. Any special allocations necessary to comply with the requirements set forth in Internal Revenue Code Section 704 and the corresponding Regulations, including, without limitation, the qualified income offset and minimum gain chargeback provisions contained therein, shall be made if the Managers deem these actions to be appropriate.

13.2 Distributions. Subject to applicable law and any limitations elsewhere in this Agreement, the Managers shall determine the amount and timing of all distributions of cash, or other assets, by the Company. Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, all distributions shall be made to all of the Members, to be decided by vote of the Managers on an annual basis. Except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, the decision as to whether to make distributions shall be within the sole discretion of the Managers.

All such distributions shall be made only to the Members who, according to the books and records of the Company, are the holders of record on the actual date of distribution. The Managers may base a determination that a distribution of cash may be made on a balance sheet, profit and loss statement, cash flow statement of the Company, or other relevant information. Neither the Company nor the Members shall incur any liability for making distributions.

13.3 Form of Distribution. No Member has the right to demand and receive any distribution from the Company in any form other than money. No Member may be compelled to accept from the Company a distribution of any asset in kind in lieu of a proportionate distribution of money being made to other Members except on the dissolution and winding up of the Company.

#### **14. ACCOUNTING, RECORDS AND REPORTING**

14.1 Books and Records. The Company shall maintain complete and accurate accounts in proper books of all transactions of or on behalf of the Company and shall enter or cause to be entered therein a full and accurate account of all transactions on behalf of the Company. The Company's books and accounting records shall be kept in accordance with such accounting principles (which shall be consistently applied throughout each accounting period) as the Managers may determine to be convenient and advisable. The Company shall maintain at its principal office all of the following:

A current list of the full name and last known business or residence address of each Member in the Company set forth in alphabetical order, including entries to these accounts for contributions and distributions; the Ownership Interest, Percentage Ownership and Voting Interests; a copy of the Certificate and any and all amendments thereto together with executed copies of any powers of attorney pursuant to which the Certificate or any amendments thereto have been executed; copies of the Company's federal, state and local income tax or information returns and reports, if any, for the six most recent taxable years; a copy of this Agreement and any and all amendments hereto together with executed copies of any powers of attorney pursuant to which this Agreement or any amendments thereto have been executed; copies of the financial statements of the Company, if any, for the six most recent Fiscal Years; the Company's



books and records as they relate to the internal affairs of the Company for at least the current and past four Fiscal Years; true and full information regarding the status of the business and financial condition of the Company; and true and full information regarding the amount of cash and a description and statement of the agreed value of any other property or services contributed by each Member and which each Member has agreed to contribute in the future, and the date on which each became a Member.

14.2 Inspection of Books and Records. Each Member has the right, on reasonable request for purposes reasonably related to the interest of the person as a Member or a Manager, to: (a) inspect and copy during normal business hours any of the Company's records described in Section 7.1; and (b) obtain from the Company promptly after their becoming available a copy of the Company's federal, state and local income tax or information returns for each Fiscal Year.

14.3 Accountings. As soon as is reasonably practicable after the close of each Fiscal Year, the Managers shall make or cause to be made a full and accurate accounting of the affairs of the Company as of the close of that Fiscal Year and shall prepare or cause to be prepared a balance sheet as of the end of such Fiscal Year, a profit and loss statement for that Fiscal Year and a statement of Members' equity showing the respective Capital Accounts of the Members as of the close of such Fiscal Year and the distributions, if any, to Members during such Fiscal Year, and any other statements and information necessary for a complete and fair presentation of the financial condition of the Company, all of which the Manager shall furnish to each Member. In addition, the Company shall furnish to each Member information regarding the Company necessary for such Member to complete such Member's federal and state income tax returns. The Company shall also furnish a copy of the Company's tax returns to any Member requesting the same. On such accounting being made, profits and losses during such Fiscal Year shall be ascertained and credited or debited, as the case may be, in the books of account of the Company to the respective Members as herein provided.

14.4 Filings. The Managers, at Company expense, shall cause the income tax returns for the Company to be prepared and timely filed with the appropriate authorities. The Managers, at Company expense, shall also cause to be prepared and timely filed with appropriate federal and state regulatory and administrative bodies amendments to, or restatements of, the Certificate and all reports required to be filed by the Company with those entities under the Act or other then current applicable laws, rules, and regulations. If the Company is required by the Act to execute or file any document and fails, after demand, to do so within a reasonable period of time or refuses to do so, any Member may prepare, execute and file that document with the Illinois Secretary of State.

14.5 Bank Accounts. The Company shall maintain its funds in one or more separate bank accounts in the name of the Company, and shall not permit the funds of the Company to be co-mingled in any fashion with the funds of any other Person.

14.6 Tax Matters Partner. The Managers may, in their exclusive discretion, appoint, remove and replace a Tax Matters Partner at any time or times. The Managers shall from time to time cause the Company to make such tax elections as they deem to be in the interests of the Company and the Members generally. The Tax Matters Partner, as defined in Internal Revenue Code Section 6231, shall represent the Company (at the Company's expense) in connection with all examinations of the Company's affairs by tax authorities, including resulting judicial and administrative proceedings, and shall expend the Company funds for professional services and costs associated therewith.

## **15. LEGAL TITLE TO PROPERTY**

Legal title to all or any portion of the property of the limited liability company shall be held in the name of "Nova Collective LLC" or, to the extent allowed by the Act, in such other name as the managers, in their sole discretion, shall determine to be in the best interest of the limited liability company. Without limiting the foregoing grant of authority, to the extent permitted by the Act, the manager may arrange to have title taken and held in its own name or in the names of trustees, nominees or straw parties for the limited liability company. It is expressly understood and agreed that the manner of holding title to the property (or any part thereof) of the limited liability company is solely for the convenience of the limited liability company, and that all such property shall be treated as property of the limited liability company, subject to the terms of these Articles.

## **16. DISSOLUTION**

16.1 The limited liability company shall be dissolved upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

- (a) when the period fixed for the duration of the limited liability company shall expire;
  - (b) by the unanimous agreement of all members, which shall be in writing;
  - (c) upon the retirement, resignation, expulsion, bankruptcy, court declaration of incompetence with respect to, or dissolution of, a member or the occurrence of any other event that terminates the continued membership of a manager in the limited liability company, unless within ninety (90) days after such event there are at least two (2) remaining managers and all the remaining managers elect to continue the business of the limited liability company by unanimous agreement;
- or

16.2 As soon as possible following the occurrence of any of the events specified in this Article effecting the dissolution of the limited liability company, the limited liability company shall execute and file, with the Secretary, articles of dissolution in accordance with the Act and in such form as shall be prescribed by the Secretary.

16.3 Upon a dissolution of the limited liability company, the assets thereof shall be liquidated, and the proceeds therefrom, together with assets distributed in kind to the extent sufficient therefor, shall be applied and distributed in order of priority as follows:

- (a) First, to creditors of the limited liability company, including members who are creditors, in the order of priority provided by law, in satisfaction of liabilities of the limited liability company other than liabilities for distribution to members under the Act;
- (b) Second, to members of the limited liability company in respect of their share of the profits and other compensation by way of income on their contributions; and
- (c) Third, to members of the limited liability company in respect to their contributions of capital

16.4 The manager of the limited liability company shall not be personally liable for the return or repayment of all or any portion of the contributions of any member; any such return or repayment shall be made solely from assets of the limited liability company.



## **17. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

17.1 Unless otherwise provided in these Articles, no member shall be liable to any other member or to the limited liability company for any good faith act or omission to act in the exercise of his or her judgment under the provisions of these Articles.

17.2 Nothing herein contained shall be construed to constitute any member hereof the agent of any other member or to limit in any manner the members in the carrying on of their own respective business or activities.

17.3 The use of any gender herein shall be deemed to be or include the other genders, and the use of the singular herein shall be deemed to be or include the plural (and vice versa), wherever appropriate. The headings herein are inserted only as a matter of convenience and reference, and in no way define, limit or describe the scope of these Articles, or the intent of any provisions thereof.

17.4 These Articles set forth all (and are intended by all parties hereto to be an integration of all) of the covenants, promises, agreements, warranties and representations among the parties hereto with respect to the limited liability company, the business of the limited liability company and the property of the limited liability company, and there are no covenants, promises, agreements, warranties or representations, oral and written, express or implied, among them other than as set forth herein.

17.5 Nothing contained in these Articles shall be construed as requiring the commission by any person of any act contrary to applicable law, including, without limitation, Section 4975 of the Code (to the extent applicable). Wherever there is any conflict between any provision of these Articles and any statute, law, ordinance or regulation contrary to which the parties have no legal right to contract, the latter shall prevail, but in such manner that the provision(s) of these Articles thus affected shall be curtailed and limited only to the extent necessary to conform with said requirement of law. In the event that any part, section, paragraph or clause of these Articles shall be held to be indefinite, invalid or otherwise unenforceable, the entire Articles shall not fail on account thereof, and the balance of the Articles shall continue in full force and effect.

17.6 The limited liability company shall indemnify, defend and save harmless each member or former member of the limited liability company against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by him, her or it in connection with the defense of an action, suit or proceeding, civil or criminal, in which he, she or it is made a party by reason of being or having been such member except in relation to matters as to which he, she or it shall be adjudged in the action, suit or proceeding to be liable for gross negligence or willful misconduct.

## **18. GOVERNING LAW**

It is the intention of the parties hereto that these Articles shall be governed by and construed and enforced in accordance with the internal laws of the State of Illinois.

## **19. BURDEN AND BENEFIT**

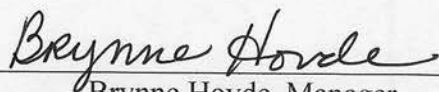
These Articles are binding upon and shall inure to the benefit of the parties hereto and their respective heirs, guardians, executors, administrators, personal and legal representatives, and successors and to the assigns of the parties hereto to the extent, but

only to the extent, the same is provided for in accordance with, and permitted by, the provisions of these Articles.

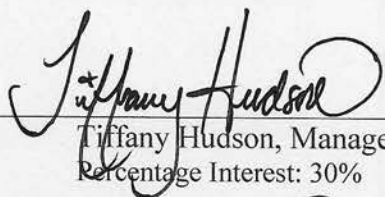
## **20. NOTICES**

Except as otherwise provided in these Articles, any notice, consent or other communication required or permitted hereunder shall be in writing and shall be addressed, in the case of the limited liability company, to its principal place of business specified in Article 5, in the case of the managers, to its address set forth opposite its signature below, and, in the case of any member, as specified on or to such other address or person as any of the foregoing parties shall furnish to the other parties in writing; and any such communication so addressed shall be deemed to have been given when delivered by hand or on the earlier of actual receipt and three (3) business days after being sent by registered or certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested, or one (1) business day after being sent by overnight courier, telegram, or cable or on actual receipt after being sent by any means not specified herein.

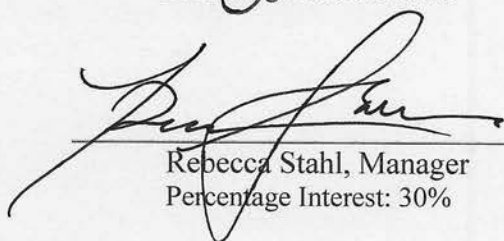
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Operating Agreement as of the day and year first above written.



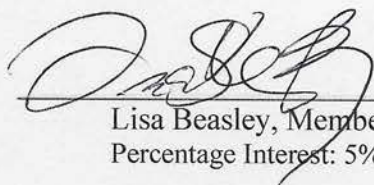
Brynne Hovde, Manager  
Percentage Interest: 35%



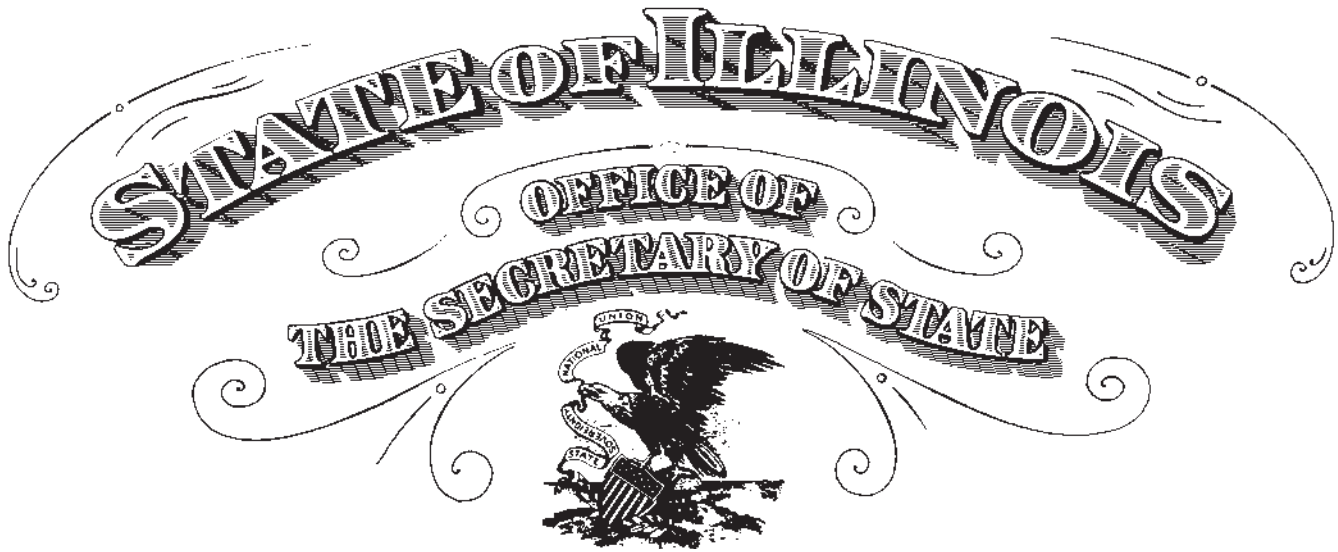
Tiffany Hudson, Manager  
Percentage Interest: 30%



Rebecca Stahl, Manager  
Percentage Interest: 30%



Lisa Beasley, Member  
Percentage Interest: 5%



***To all to whom these Presents Shall Come, Greeting:***

*I, Alexi Giannoulas, Secretary of State of the State of Illinois, do hereby certify that I am the keeper of the records of the Department of Business Services. I certify that*

NOVA COLLECTIVE LLC, HAVING ORGANIZED IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS ON JANUARY 15, 2017, APPEARS TO HAVE COMPLIED WITH ALL PROVISIONS OF THE LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY ACT OF THIS STATE, AND AS OF THIS DATE IS IN GOOD STANDING AS A DOMESTIC LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.



***In Testimony Whereof, I hereto set***  
*my hand and cause to be affixed the Great Seal of*  
*the State of Illinois, this 27TH*  
*day of JUNE A.D. 2025 .*

*Alexi Giannoulas*

SECRETARY OF STATE



## **Request for Proposal**

### **California Public Employees' Retirement System Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services Reproduction Copy**

#### **RFP No. 2024-9420**

June 26, 2025  
Submitted By:  
Tiffany Perry  
CEO and Founder  
Total pages: 46



Amberus Partners  
655 N. Central Ave  
17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Glendale, CA 91203  
[tperry@amberuspartners.com](mailto:tperry@amberuspartners.com)  
(818) 434-7118  
Tax ID: 93-1861072

June 25, 2025

California Public Employees' Retirement System  
Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Subject: Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Submitted via electronic mail to [ossd\\_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov](mailto:ossd_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov)

To whom it may concern:

Tiffany Perry Consulting, d/b/a Amberus Partners (hereinafter referred to as Amberus Partners) is pleased to submit this proposal to the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) consulting services.

We are eager and willing to partner with you to provide the services described in the RFP. We believe that CalPERS can advance a world-class DEI program and achieve remarkable outcomes by amplifying what you already do well and investing in opportunities to expand your impact on your employees, members, beneficiaries, and the broader community and stakeholders. Your values of respect, integrity, accountability, openness, and balance align with how we would approach our partnership with you. We naturally approach this work by listening to stakeholders' perspectives, evaluating current approaches against leading practices to identify areas for improvement, and developing a plan with outcomes clearly defined from the outset.

Amberus Partners is a boutique firm specializing in organizational change management, leadership development, and DEI. This combination enables us to bring deep practical experience and a holistic focus on creating a healthy and high-performing workplace. We have available the staff and resources required to perform all the services and complete all the deliverables described in this RFP. Our team brings a blend of expertise and certifications across DEI strategy, human resources, employment law, organizational change, and intercultural competency. We have experience working with executive leadership and boards in private and non-profit sectors, and healthcare and investment firms.

In today's climate, where DEI is increasingly politicized and under attack, we take an innovative approach by anchoring DEI strategy in organizational performance, accountability, and systems change. We focus on embedding equity into the DNA of how work gets done, how decisions are made, how talent is allocated, and how leaders are held accountable for outcomes. We also apply change management science to help leaders anticipate resistance, adapt messaging to different stakeholder mindsets, and build coalitions that sustain progress. Our frameworks are designed to be data-driven, legally sound, and politically smart, helping public institutions like CalPERS lead with courage and pragmatism.

In the following pages, we have outlined our experience, qualifications, and fee for our proposal. Our proposal constitutes a firm and irrevocable offer, valid for 180 days from the date of this letter, to perform the work identified in the RFP. If you have any questions about the information presented in this proposal or any communication regarding this proposal, please contact Tiffany Perry, Amberus Partners, CEO and Founder.

I am duly authorized to bind our organization to this contract.

*Tiffany Perry*

Tiffany Perry

CEO and Founder of Amberus Partners

[tperry@amberuspartners.com](mailto:tperry@amberuspartners.com)

818-434-7118

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## **California Public Employees' Retirement System**

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**

#### **Minimum Qualifications Certification**

As prescribed in the Minimum Qualifications, Section IV, of the Request for Proposal (RFP), all Proposers are required to sign and return this Attachment, along with written evidence of how each qualification is met on Attachment A, Exhibit 1, Evidence of Minimum Qualifications. The undersigned hereby certifies that the firm submitting this response fulfills the minimum qualifications outlined below, as well as the requirements contained in the RFP.

#### **Minimum Qualifications include:**

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.
- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.
- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.
- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least one (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.
- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**

*Tiffany Perry*

6/25/2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Amberus Partners

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Firm

Tiffany Perry, Managing Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Title (Please Print)

### **Evidence of Minimum Qualifications**

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.

| <b>Organization Name</b> | <b>Years of Operation</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Amberus Partners         | 2                         |

- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.

| <b>Firm</b> | <b>Years of Experience</b> | <b>Type</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Contact Person</b>                   | <b>Contact Information</b>                                                                                                                     |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Point B     | 3                          | Conducted assessments to evaluate cultural inclusion and develop DEI strategic plan to improve employee diversity. Developed scorecard to measure DEI plan effectiveness. Developed and delivered unconscious bias trainings to staff.                                                                                           | Nell Haslett-Brousse<br>Raquel Orochena | <a href="mailto:Janelle_haslett@hotmail.com">Janelle_haslett@hotmail.com</a><br><a href="mailto:rorochena@pointb.com">rorochena@pointb.com</a> |
| Dolby       | 11 months                  | <b>DEI Assessments, Strategic Planning, Training and Advising –</b><br>We assessed the company's DEI strategy through focus groups, data analysis, and policy reviews, providing recommendations to improve leadership commitment and integrate best practices into talent management and leadership development. Rolled out DEI | Lisa Hotran                             | Lisa.hotran@dolby.com                                                                                                                          |

|                                         |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                           |                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                         |          | fundamentals training to HR leadership team.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                           |                                                                                          |
| Goodwill of Southern Los Angeles County | 4 months | <b>DEI Assessment and Strategic Planning</b> - We assessed the organizations DEI maturity through leadership interviews and employee surveys and benchmarked against competitor best practices to identify gaps in talent management, community relations and supplier diversity. Facilitated action planning workshop with employee experience and expanding diversity programs. | Jon Orozco<br>Donna Snell | jon@verkvibe.com<br><a href="mailto:dsnell@goodwillsoal.org">dsnell@goodwillsoal.org</a> |
| Right Management                        | 3 months | <b>DEI Training</b> - Facilitated multiple inclusive leadership training sessions to supervisors.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Jody Wheaton              | <a href="mailto:Jody.wheaton@right.com">Jody.wheaton@right.com</a>                       |



- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.

| <b>Firm</b>                             | <b>Years of Experience</b> | <b>Type</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Contact Person</b>     | <b>Contact Information</b>                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Point B                                 | 2                          | Employee culture and communications-developed DEI communications strategy for organization to raise awareness of company's DEI efforts and ERG events among their employees. Wrote DEI communications for the organization. Developed change management strategy to elevate leadership commitment to DEI. | Nell Haslett-Brousse      | <a href="mailto:Janelle_haslett@hotmail.com">Janelle_haslett@hotmail.com</a>                 |
| Dolby                                   | 11 months                  | Consultation services in talent and culture – Partnered with to develop employee and leadership representation diversity goals using Census data. Developed strategy to increase leadership diversity and facilitated full-day DEI training to upskill HR and recruiting teams' knowledge about DEI.      | Lisa Hotran               | Lisa.hotran@dolby.com                                                                        |
| Goodwill of Southern Los Angeles County | 4 months                   | Provided consultation services to help client create a DEI strategy and roadmap for talent practices. Strategy helped them recruit and retain more diverse employee population and reduce employee turnover.                                                                                              | Jon Orozco<br>Donna Snell | jon@verkvibe.com<br><a href="mailto:dsnell@goodwillsocial.org">dsnell@goodwillsocial.org</a> |

- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least one (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.

| <b>Firm</b> | <b>Years of Experience</b> | <b>Type</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Contact Person</b> | <b>Contact Information</b> |
|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Point B     | 1                          | Tiffany Perry (Key Personnel) provided consultation services to Point B's corporate Board from 2021-2022 – Partnered with Board of Directors Chair to strategize Board priorities and agendas for Board of Director meetings and developed annual corporate budget that was approved by the Board. | Mike Pongon           | (206) 517-5000             |

- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

| <b>Firm</b>                            | <b>Type</b> | <b>Contact Person</b>   | <b>Contact Information</b>   |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| NTT Global Data Centers Americas, Inc. | Private     | <b>Jonathan Hamaker</b> | jonathan.hamaker@nttdata.com |
|                                        |             |                         |                              |
|                                        |             |                         |                              |

## PROPOSAL/PROPOSER CERTIFICATION SHEET

### 1. Designation of Official Contact Person

The individual to whom all information and correspondence regarding this RFP should be transmitted is:

Firm Name: Tiffany Perry Consulting, LLC DBA Amberus Partners

Contact Name and Title: Tiffany Perry, Managing Member

Address: 655 N. Central Ave, Floor 17, Glendale, CA 91203

Phone Number: 818-434-7118

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: tperry@amberuspartners.com

### 2. Indicate your organization type:

- ☒ Limited Liability Company
- ☐ Partnership
- ☐ Joint Venture (If checked, attach required documentation. See "Exhibit 1")
- ☐ Limited Liability Corporation
- ☐ Corporation (Corporation Number \_\_\_\_\_)
- ☐ Sole Proprietorship

### 3. Federal Employer ID No. (FEIN): 93-1861072

### 4. California Corporation Number: 202357517545

### 5. Are you certified with the Department of General Services, Office of Small Business and DVBE Certification as:

- |                                         |                                         |                                        |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| a. California Small Business            | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b. Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise | Yes <input type="checkbox"/>            | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. California Micro Business            | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/>            |

**NOTE:** A copy of your Certification is required to be included if either of the above items is checked "Yes"

### 6. Statement of Compliance

Proposer has, unless exempted, complied with the State of California's requirements pertaining to the development, implementation, and maintenance of the nondiscrimination program. (California Government Code section 12990 (a-f) and Title 2, California Code of Regulations, section 8103, et. seq.)

### 7. Does your Proposal contain Proprietary Information?

Yes ☐ No ☒ (If yes, attach a separate sheet to this certification which specifically itemizes the section(s) marked as “proprietary information”. See “Submission of Proposals”.)

### **8. Reproduction Copy**

The total number of pages contained in the “Copy for Reproduction”: 46 (See “Submission of Proposals”.)

### **9. Contract Execution Information**

If awarded a contract, the individual to whom the contract should be transmitted is:

Contact Name and Title: Tiffany Perry, Managing Member

Address: 655 N Central Ave, 17th Floor, Glendale, CA 91203

Phone Number: 818-434-7118

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: tperry@amberuspartners.com

The name of the company officer authorized to sign this contract is:

Name and Title: Tiffany Perry, Managing Member

Address: 655 N Central Ave, 17th Floor, Glendale, CA 91203

Phone Number: 818-434-7118

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: tperry@amberuspartners.com

---

**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**

*Tiffany L. Perry*

---

Authorized Signature

6/25/2025

---

Date

Tiffany L. Perry, Founder and CEO

---

Name and Title (Please Print)



California Public Employees' Retirement System  
**California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration**

Firm's Name Amberus Partners

The firm named above certifies, that the firm is eligible to contract with the State of California and CalPERS, pursuant to the provisions of the California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act of 2003 (Public Contract Code section 10286 et. seq.).

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

*Tiffany Perry*

6/25/2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Tiffany Perry, Managing Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Title (Please Print)



## California Public Employees' Retirement System Contracting Act Declarations

CalPERS is prohibited from contracting with individuals or firms who do business subject to the following statutes. By signing this form, you are certifying that you or your firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, a state agency.

### **Sudan Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477, a bidder or proposer who is a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm does not currently have, and has not had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, and in accordance with Public Contract Code section 10478, this firm hereby certifies it is not a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).
- ☐ This firm is a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), but has received written permission from the Department of General Services (DGS) to submit a bid or proposal pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477(b). A copy of the written permission from DGS is included with the firm's bid or proposal.
- ☐ This firm currently has, or has had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, but hereby certifies that is not a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).

### **Iran Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to the Iran Contracting Act of 2010 (Public Contract Code section 2201, et. seq.), if a bidder, at the time of the bid or proposal for a new contract, or renewal of an existing contract, has engaged<sup>1</sup> in investment activities in Iran (as described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5) is ineligible, and shall not, bid on, submit a proposal for, or enter into or renew a contract with a

---

<sup>1</sup> Or such person is identified on a list created by the Department of General Services pursuant to Section 2203(b) as a person engaging in investment activities in Iran.



public entity for goods or services for one million dollars (\$1,000,000) or more. (Public Contract Code section 2203(a)).

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm, or person, hereby certifies that it (or he or she) is not identified on the DGS list created pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(b) as a firm or person engaging in “investment activities” in Iran described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5(a) or 2202.5(b).
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies it is permitted to submit a bid or proposal to a public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c) because its investment activities in Iran were (1) made before July 1, 2010, (2) were not expanded or renewed after July 1, 2010, and (3) the firm has adopted, publicized, and is implementing a formal plan to cease the investment activities in Iran and to refrain from engaging in any new investments in Iran.
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies that although it is a financial institution that extends twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) or more in credit to another person, for 45 days or more, the person who will use the credit to provide goods or services in the energy sector in Iran is a person permitted to submit a bid or proposal to the public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c). (See Public Contract Code section 2202.3(d)).

**Democratic Republic of the Congo Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10490 and section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)), a scrutinized company (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services related to products or services that are the reason the firm must comply with section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This is not a “scrutinized company” or does not currently use any conflict mineral products that are necessary to the functionality or production of a product manufactured by the firm from the Democratic Republic of the Congo or an “adjoining country” (see 15 U.S.C.A § 78(m)(p)), and section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (Pub.L. No.111-203, (July 21, 2010) 124 Stat. 1376)).
- ☐ This firm has ceased to be regarded as a “scrutinized company” (as defined by Cal. Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) because (1) it is not in violation of section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)(p)); or (2) it has filed an amended or corrective filing under section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which filing corrected the violations; or (3) three years have passed since the date of the final judgment or settlement entered in a civil or administrative action brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

- ☐ Disclosure requirements have been temporarily waived by the SEC because the President of the United States has transmitted a determination that the waiver or revision is in the national security interest of the United States, or the disclosure requirements have been terminated because the President has determined and certified to the appropriate congressional committees that no armed groups continue to be directly involved and benefitting from this firm's commercial activity involving conflict minerals.

**Unruh Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 2010, a bidder or proposer who proposes to enter into or renew a contract with a state agency with respect to any contract in the amount of \$100,000 or more must certify, under penalty of perjury, at the time the bid or proposal is submitted or the contract is renewed that they are in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, and that any policy that they have against any sovereign nation or peoples recognized by the government of the United States, including, but not limited to, the nation and people of Israel, is not used to discriminate in violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act or the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm certifies that it is in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act, as defined in Public Contract Code Section 2010.

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make these declarations on behalf of the above-named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

Tiffany Perry  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature  
  
Tiffany Perry, Managing Member  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Title (Please Print)

06/25/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date  
  
Amberus Partners  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Firm Name (Please Print)



## CalPERS Contract-Related Disclosure Form

*(To be used if Contractor is not required to file a  
Placement Agent Information Disclosure Form (2 CCR § 559))*

**This form is to be used for all Contract-Related Disclosures, including Proposals.**

Please refer to title 2 California Code Regulations section 559.1 (b)(1) through (b)(3), prior to completing this form.

- a. Solicitation or Contract Number:  
2024-9420
- b. Proposer or Contractor Name:  
Amberus Partners
- c. Name of Individual Authorized to bind the Proposer or Contractor:  
Tiffany Perry
- d. Contact Person (if different than above):  
N/A
- e. E-mail Address:  
tperry@amberuspartners.com
- f. Phone No:  
818-434-7118
- g. Name of CalPERS Contact (if applicable):  
N/A

Have you, your firm or your firm's principals, employees, agents, or affiliates compensated or agreed to compensate, directly or indirectly, any Agent as defined in section 559.1(a)(1) (whether or not employed by you) or any entity to act as Agent in connection with this Solicitation or Contract? (§559.1 (b)(1))

☐ Yes. ☒ No.

**If you checked Yes, please respond to questions 1 through 5 below, and sign and date the Form on the final page.**

**If you checked No, please respond to question 5 below, and sign and date this Form on the final page.**

1. Please list the names and relationships for each Agent in connection with the CalPERS Solicitation or Contract, including a description of the relationship with the Proposer or Contractor. (Add an additional page if necessary.) Please check the box to the left if the Agent is a current or former CalPERS Board Member, Staff Member, consultant, or has a Familial Relationship with any such individual.

|                          | Name | Relationship |
|--------------------------|------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |

2. Please attach a copy of all contracts, agreements, or other documents memorializing the relationship between the Proposer or Contractor and the Agent. When an *entity* is retained as an Agent, please also include the requested information for any officer, director, or employee actively providing Agent services with regard to CalPERS or receiving more than 15% of the Agent fees.

N/A

3. Provide a description of any financial or Familial Relationship(s) between the Agent and a Board Member or Staff Member, including the names of the Board Member(s) and/or Staff Members:

N/A

4. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Agent to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.

N/A

5. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Proposer or Contractor to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.

N/A

By executing this form the undersigned represents and warrants the information set forth herein is true and correct. The undersigned agrees to update this information within 14 calendar days of the date Proposer or Contractor knows or reasonably should have known of any defect or changes to this information.

The Contract-Related Disclosure Form and attachments shall be a public record subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act. No confidentiality restrictions shall be placed on information submitted by the Proposer or Contractor.

The undersigned represents and agrees it shall make a representation and warranty as to the continuing accuracy of this information in any final written agreement between it and CalPERS.

I, the official named below, acknowledge and declare I have read and understand CCR section 559.1, and that the above-named firm has provided information required by section 559.1 and this Form. I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above-named firm, and declare the foregoing is true and correct as of the date of execution of this document. I further acknowledge my firm's responsibility to provide updates in the event this information is determined to be incorrect or has changed.

*Tiffany Perry*

6/25/2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Tiffany Perry, Managing Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and Title

**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**

**Proposal Questionnaire**

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to submit responses and documentation as requested on this questionnaire. The information requested must be provided in the prescribed format; all questions must be repeated in their entirety before the answers are given. Responses that deviate materially from the prescribed format may lead to the rejection of the Proposal.

Document current and planned level of compliance with Revised 508 standards for all deliverables to be provided by the successful Proposer, including any electronic content that may be posted to the CalPERS website. Proposer may document its compliance by providing (a) its policy and procedures for validating the accessibility of electronic content; (b) a narrative description of said policy and procedures; or (c) a written Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) for each Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Standards item that is to be developed, updated, configured for, and delivered to CalPERS. Any documentation provided in responding to this question should be based on the latest version of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) provided by the Industry Technology Industry Council (ITIC).

The response to all questions in the aggregate must be limited to twenty (20) pages maximum. Please note if a submission with more than twenty (20) pages is received only the first twenty (20) pages will be considered for scoring. Provide responses in the order the prompts are listed.

**A. ORGANIZATION and BACKGROUND**  
**(Pass/Fail)**

1. Name of your organization.

Amberus Partners

2. Location of headquarters.

655 N Central Ave, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, Glendale, CA 91203

3. Location and address of branch which would provide services under this contract.

655 N. Central Ave, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor, Glendale, CA 91203

4. Number of years your organization has been in business.

2 years

5. Within the past five (5) years, have there been any significant changes in your organization's ownership, corporate officers, or principal business? If yes, please describe.

There have not been any significant changes in Amberus Partners' ownership, corporate officers, or principal business in the past 5 years.

6. Mission statement or statement of your organization's principal business. Please provide a copy of incorporation documents or other public documents that describe the primary focus of your firm.

Amberus Partners principal business is diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and organizational change. Poor culture is a top reason for employees to disengage and look for opportunities elsewhere. We help organizations build an inclusive and equitable culture so that all employees feel that they belong, are fairly treated, and have the opportunity to grow their careers.

Our focus on organizational change, leadership development, and DE&I enables us to bring deep practical experience and a holistic focus on creating a healthy and high-performing workplace

**B. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CONSULTING SERVICES CAPABILITIES  
(Pass/Fail)**

Please provide a summary of the services that your firm provided in the service categories below, in one or multiple of the following business sector(s); public, private, and/or non-profit; in which the work was performed. Clearly explain your experience in all business sector(s) for each category.

1. Providing advisory services on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) best practices.

We offer comprehensive DEI advisory services to help organizations create inclusive and equitable workplaces. Our expertise extends across various industries, providing advisory services to publicly traded, non-profit, and privately owned companies. We take a holistic and tailored approach, understanding your unique needs and goals to craft solutions that align with your company's values and priorities.

**Here are some areas where we've successfully guided organizations in incorporating DEI best practices:**

- **Corporate Business Strategy:** Integrating DEI into the core business strategy to foster inclusive decision-making and leadership accountability.
- **Recruitment, Advancement, and Retention:** Developing inclusive recruitment strategies, promoting diverse talent, and implementing retention initiatives to reduce turnover.
- **Job Design and Compensation:** Ensuring equitable job design and compensation practices to minimize bias and promote fairness.
- **Employee Benefits:** Designing inclusive benefits, including health benefits, that cater to employees' diverse needs.
- **DEI Metrics:** Developing metrics and tracking systems to measure DEI progress and identify areas for improvement.
- **Employee Communications Strategy:** Crafting effective communication strategies to foster transparency and engagement around DEI initiatives.
- **Learning and Development:** Providing customized training programs for employees and leaders to build DEI competency and foster an inclusive culture.
- **Work in the Community:** Developing partnerships and initiatives to support and engage with diverse communities.

- **Marketing and Supplier Diversity:** Ensuring diversity and inclusion in marketing efforts and supplier selection.
- **Incorporating AI Technology:** Guiding organizations to ethically leverage AI technology to minimize hiring and promotion decision bias.

**Our impact:**

Through our advisory services, we've helped clients achieve tangible results:

- **Improved Leadership Accountability:** Companies have developed more inclusive decision-making frameworks and strengthened leadership accountability for DEI outcomes, leading to measurable progress in diversity representation at executive levels.
- **Increased Diverse Talent Pools:** Our guidance on recruitment, advancement, and retention has helped clients improve the diversity of their talent pools and reduce turnover rates.
- **Data-Driven DEI Initiatives:** By assisting clients in developing DEI metrics and tracking systems, we've empowered them to identify and address areas of inequity with data-driven initiatives.

We are committed to partnering with you to create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace where all employees feel valued, respected, and empowered to succeed.

2. Providing education and training on DEI matters to Boards of Trustees.

We have extensive experience providing education and training on DEI matters to Boards of Trustees. We understand that boards are critical in shaping an organization's commitment to DEI and driving meaningful change. Our approach combines expert knowledge, engaging facilitation, and tailored content to meet the unique needs of each board.

Here's an example of our successful work with a Board of Trustees of a non-profit regional retailer:

We led a day-long workshop for the Board, focusing on DEI best practices, including:

- **Hiring, Advancement, and Compensation:** We provided practical strategies and tools to reduce bias in talent management processes, recruit a diverse pool of talent, and ensure equal opportunities for advancement, pay equity, and leadership roles for underrepresented groups.
- **Employee Culture:** We explored ways to foster a more inclusive and welcoming culture that values and respects diverse perspectives and experiences.
- **Mission Work:** We helped the board align their DEI goals with the organization's broader mission and work in the community.
- **Supplier Diversity:** We provided insights into the importance of supplier diversity and guided the board on implementing policies to encourage procurement from diverse vendors.

By the end of the workshop, the Board of Trustees:

- **Gained a Clear Understanding of DEI Principles:** They developed a deeper understanding of DEI concepts and their application in board governance.



- **Equipped to Reduce Bias in Talent Management:** They acquired practical tools and strategies to minimize bias and promote equity in key talent management practices.
- **Aligned DEI Goals with Mission and Work:** They gained a clear vision of integrating DEI into the organization's overall mission and community impact.
- **Expanded DEI Efforts Beyond Internal Operations:** They learned the importance of supplier diversity and developed strategies to extend their DEI efforts into the community.

**Our Approach to Board Training:**

- **Customized Content:** We tailor our training content to the organization's specific needs, priorities, and industry.
- **Engaging Facilitation:** We use interactive exercises, actionable tools, case studies, and discussions to create a dynamic and impactful learning experience.
- **Improve leadership Sponsorship:** Our approach incorporates using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to assess leaders' intercultural competence, identifying their current stage of cultural sensitivity, and provide tailored development plans. We use the IDI to help leaders better understand their own cultural biases and learn how to more effectively champion DEI initiatives, fostering a more inclusive environment that aligns with organizational goals.

3. Conducting assessments of established DEI programs and produce reports of findings and recommendations.

Conducting assessments of established DEI programs is crucial for ensuring that diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts effectively drive change. We conduct these assessments at the beginning of the project because they help identify strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement within an organization's DEI initiatives. We gather qualitative and quantitative data, including employee and leader feedback, representation metrics, review policies and practices, and program outcomes, to establish a baseline for measuring progress and identifying challenges that may hinder inclusion. Findings from the assessment help us develop culturally relevant and actionable recommendations, designed to enhance DEI practices.

Below are examples of how we approach assessment and report development.

**Publicly Traded Global High Tech Engineering Company:** We conducted focus groups and interviews with the HR team, employees, and leadership team. We also reviewed employee engagement surveys, recruiting, hiring, and retention practices, company policies, and DEI programs to assess the effectiveness of the company's existing DEI strategy against The Centre for Global Inclusion's Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks. In addition, we analyzed the job candidate pipeline, hiring trends, workforce demographic data, and retention and promotion data to identify areas where challenges existed in hiring and advancing underrepresented talent.

We developed a report with assessment findings and recommendations to improve leadership commitment to DEI and incorporate DEI best practices into employee development strategies. We developed a plan to enhance the HR team's knowledge of DEI and educate executive

leadership on inclusive leadership. Finally, we presented the assessment findings to the Chief People Officer and HR leadership team.

**Publicly traded Global High Tech Engineering Company:** The client was experiencing declining participation with its Employee Resource Groups and needed help reinvigorating momentum and company participation in their initiatives. We interviewed Employee Resource Group leaders and researched the best practices for ERGs to evaluate the effectiveness of our current ERG programming. We then developed a report that included assessment findings and recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of ERGs and increase employee participation. We presented the report to the Head of Sustainability and Social Impact.

As a result of the report, key recommendations were implemented, including better alignment of ERG goals with the company's broader business objectives and enhanced support for ERG leadership development. Consequently, employee participation in ERGs increased, and the company experienced improved engagement from underrepresented groups, thereby strengthening the impact of its DEI efforts.

#### 4. Meeting with Boards of Trustees as part of the assessment and information-gathering process.

We understand the Board of Trustees' crucial role in shaping an organization's DEI journey. Therefore, engaging with the board is integral to our assessment and information-gathering process. A successful DEI strategy requires understanding the board's vision, priorities, and commitment to DEI.

Here's how we approach meetings with Boards of Trustees:

- **Active Listening and Understanding:** We prioritize actively listening to the board's perspectives on the organization's current DEI landscape. We seek to understand their vision for DEI, their existing knowledge and experience, and any concerns or challenges they perceive.
- **Information Gathering:** We gather information about the board's current DEI-related policies, practices, and initiatives, involving reviewing board composition data, understanding the board's role in overseeing DEI progress, and exploring their current engagement with DEI issues.
- **Sharing Expertise and Best Practices:** We share our knowledge of DEI best practices, relevant industry trends, and legal considerations, which provides the board with a broader context for their DEI journey.
- **Collaborative Exploration of Opportunities:** We work collaboratively with the board to identify areas of opportunity for improvement and explore potential strategies for enhancing their DEI efforts, including open dialogue, brainstorming, and joint problem-solving.

Meeting with the Board of Trustees allows us to:

- **Ensure Alignment:** We can align our DEI recommendations with the board's vision and priorities, fostering greater buy-in and support for proposed initiatives.

- **Address Specific Needs:** We can tailor our assessment and recommendations to address the board's specific areas of interest and concern.
- **Foster Board Ownership:** We encourage board ownership of the DEI journey, empowering them to champion DEI within the organization.

We believe engaging with Boards of Trustees meaningfully and collaboratively is essential for developing and implementing successful and sustainable DEI strategies.

5. Meeting with executive leadership as part of the assessment and information-gathering process.

Meeting with executive leadership as part of gathering information and conducting the assessment is critical for aligning diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts with organizational goals. Leadership insights provide valuable perspectives on existing challenges, strategic priorities, and the organization's commitment to DEI. These meetings help gather information on policies, practices, and culture from the top, ensuring buy-in and accountability. Engaging leadership in the assessment process also fosters ownership of the resulting recommendations, driving long-term commitment to the changes needed to create a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

Below are examples of how we partner with executive leadership to conduct assessments.

**Non-Profit Regional Retailer:** Conducted interviews with executive leadership to assess the maturity of the company's commitment and accountability to DEI, DEI practices in talent management practices, supplier diversity, and community engagement against competitors' best practices.

The meetings uncovered key areas where the organization lagged in terms of leadership commitment, talent management, supplier diversity, and community engagement. We met and presented findings to the C-Suite and Board. The findings led to the adoption of new DEI initiatives, including improving the employee experience and expanding supplier diversity programs.

**Global Biotech Company:** We met and interviewed Legal and Healthcare Compliance senior executives and senior executives within their global partner departments to understand the legal and compliance needs for a five-year corporate strategy and supporting talent and leadership development strategy.

Through interviews with senior legal and healthcare compliance executives and their global partners, insights were gathered that helped align the company's five-year corporate strategy with legal and compliance needs. This process also informed the development of a tailored talent and leadership development strategy, ensuring that key roles in compliance and leadership were equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate complex legal requirements and support the company's long-term goals. As a result, the company strengthened its strategic alignment and readiness for regulatory challenges.

6. Preparing an action plan aligned to organizational core values and assessment findings.

Preparing a DEI action plan aligned with an organization's core values and assessment findings ensures that DEI efforts are both strategic and authentic. This approach ties DEI initiatives directly to the organization's mission, fostering greater buy-in from stakeholders. By using assessment data, the plan targets specific areas for improvement, such as recruitment or employee development, and provides clear steps for progress. Aligning the plan with core values strengthens organizational culture and enhances employee engagement, driving lasting and meaningful change.

Below are examples of how we align action plans to the organization's values and assessment findings.

**Regional non-profit retailer:** We facilitated a half-day project kick-off workshop with the CEO and their executive leadership team, where we specifically discussed the organization's employee value proposition, its core values, and how their actions could demonstrate their employee brand or values in practice within the context of DEIB. Then, as part of the assessment phase, we deployed an organization-wide survey and conducted interviews with a large sample of employees across all levels and departments within the business to gather their perspectives on successes and opportunities for improvement in DEI at the organization.

We then hosted a day-long workshop with Board members, executive leadership, managers, and employees to develop a DEI vision, DEI goals, and an action plan for the organization.

We presented the values, discussion feedback from the kickoff, and findings from the assessment to the action planning workshop participants as input into the action planning portion of the workshop. Participants took that information and developed a strategic plan with specific actions over the course of a year to advance its mission work in the community and embed DEI principles in its talent management and development practices, supplier diversity, marketing, and community advocacy work. The plan provided a roadmap for advancing the organization's mission in the community while ensuring that DEI principles were embedded in every facet of its operations.

**Global biotech company:** An assessment of the company uncovered gaps in its organizational culture that impacted the effectiveness of its quality and compliance processes. We collaborated with the global executive leadership of the healthcare compliance team to create a culture evolution strategic plan, aligning it with the company's core values and assessment findings. The plan set short-, medium-, and long-term objectives to foster a culture of quality and compliance, incorporating ethics training, leadership toolkits, and a comprehensive communications strategy. As a result, leadership and employees adopted a compliance-driven mindset, enhancing accountability and promoting ethical practices and regulatory adherence throughout the organization.

#### 7. Conducting DEI best practices research and provide analysis and reports.

Conducting DEI best practices research is essential to ensure that organizations are implementing effective strategies to foster inclusion and equity. By reviewing successful DEI models, policies, and practices across industries, researchers can identify what works and why. This analysis allows organizations to benchmark their initiatives, align with proven methods, and stay current with evolving DEI trends.

Below are examples of how we conduct research in DEI best practices to develop reports.

**National Mid-Market Consulting Firm:** A regional office of a management consulting firm lagged peers in the representation of women and people of color due to a lack of systemic DEI practices in recruiting, hiring, advancement, and retention practices. We consulted multiple sources on attraction, advancement, and retention best practices in professional services firms. Specifically, we reviewed DEI reports published by competitor consulting firms (Deloitte, PwC, and McKinsey) that provide data-driven insights and best practices for enhancing diversity in consulting firms. We reviewed DiversityInc's Top 50 Companies for Diversity for strategies that would drive results. We attended a local DEI-focused conference that featured speakers from organizations with successful DEI programs. We accessed peer-reviewed journals, such as Harvard Business Review and other journals available through the academic platform JSTOR to uncover effective DEI initiatives for professional services organizations. Finally, we consulted The Centre for Global Inclusion's Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion benchmarks to assess where the client could mature its talent management practices and leadership commitment to DEI to improve its employee and leadership diversity.

Gathering information from these sources helped us gain an informed and broad understanding of best practices in DEI to apply to the particular organization. We presented our research findings to regional executive leadership team, who championed a DEI roadmap to implement recommended best practices.

**Regional non-profit retailer:** A non-profit experienced 80% employee turnover due to employee perception that culture was not inclusive, pay was not equitable, and there was a lack of career advancement opportunities. The organization wanted to incorporate DEI best practices into their culture. We consulted a variety of resources for best practices, including the Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion benchmarks; national retail federation reports on DEI initiatives in retail; corporate social responsibility reports from private and non-profit competitors, and reports from other regional non-profit retailers. We also interviewed a Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion officer for another regional non-profit retailer for DEI best practices that could be incorporated into talent management processes and how they overcame leader and employee resistance to DEI. Consulting these sources gave us a comprehensive view of how leading retail and non-profit organizations successfully integrate impactful DEI practices into their operations.

We incorporated the research into a report that we presented to the board and the executive leadership team to help them develop the DEI action plan.

#### 8. Advising on best practices in procurement.

Incorporating supplier diversity in an organization's overall DEI strategy is essential for creating equitable opportunities for diverse suppliers and fostering an inclusive supply chain. It involves helping organizations implement strategies to ensure that minority-owned, women-owned, and other underrepresented businesses are considered in procurement decisions. This can lead to innovation, cost savings, and alignment with social responsibility goals.

Below is an example of how we helped an organization develop a supplier diversity program.

**Regional non-profit retailer:** Our approach to developing a supplier diversity program included conducting supplier diversity assessments, setting diversity spending targets, removing barriers for diverse suppliers, and promoting inclusive contracting practices. We advised them to regularly monitor and evaluate supplier engagement and performance to help sustain a diverse and equitable procurement ecosystem while driving business success.

Implementing this policy significantly increased the company's procurement from minority-owned businesses. Our recommendations for a comprehensive supplier diversity program, included outreach to diverse suppliers, mentorship opportunities, and targeted bidding processes. This would help expand the retailer's supplier base and help create economic opportunities for underrepresented small business owners in the communities where the non-profit operated.

9. Advising on best practices in hiring.

Advising on best practices in hiring for a DEI strategy is essential for building a more diverse and inclusive workforce. A DEI-focused hiring approach ensures that recruitment processes are free from bias, helping to attract candidates from a wide range of backgrounds. Best practices include writing inclusive job descriptions, implementing blind recruitment to eliminate bias, and using diverse interview panels. Additionally, actively sourcing candidates from underrepresented groups and leveraging partnerships with organizations that promote diversity can improve recruitment outcomes. By embedding DEI into hiring practices, organizations can foster a more innovative and equitable workplace that better represents their customer base.

Below are examples of how we advised on best practices in hiring for organizations.

**National Mid-Market Management Consulting Firm:** We provided training for Hiring Managers, Interviewers, and the Recruiting team on how to address unconscious biases in sourcing job candidates, conducting interviews, and making hiring decisions. We also offered guidance to the recruiting team on making systemic changes to job descriptions and the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring processes to mitigate unconscious bias in talent selection.

The revised job descriptions and recruiting processes resulted in a substantial increase in the diversity of our candidate pool. The Interviewers underwent training to conduct more inclusive interviews, focusing solely on candidates' skills and qualifications while actively challenging stereotypes, biases, and the notion of cultural fit. This holistic training initiative significantly heightened awareness of unconscious biases among the client's hiring managers, interviewers, and recruiting team, empowering them with the strategies to effectively address and mitigate these biases.

**National Hospital and Medical Facility Provider:** We advised the healthcare provider on implementing and improving employee adoption of human capital technology to support diverse hiring practices by tracking the representation of underrepresented groups across all job levels. This technology enabled the provider to proactively identify gaps in workforce diversity and ensure that hiring processes are equitable. The technology incorporated tools to reduce bias in recruitment and support targeted recruitment efforts for roles that reflect the diversity of the patient population, enhancing cultural competence in care delivery.

10. Advising on best practices in healthcare delivery equity and accessibility.

Advising on best practices in healthcare delivery equity and accessibility ensures that all individuals, regardless of background, have fair access to quality care. By evaluating current processes, identifying disparities, and implementing inclusive strategies, organizations can address systemic inequities in care. This includes improving access for underrepresented populations, enhancing cultural competence among providers, and ensuring equitable treatment outcomes. Recommendations tailored to these needs promote healthier communities and reduce barriers, driving better health outcomes for all while fostering an inclusive healthcare system that serves diverse populations effectively.

Below is an example of how we advised on best practices in healthcare delivery equity and accessibility for an organization.

**Healthcare Software Technology Company:** We advised a healthcare technology company on best practices to promote equity and accessibility of healthcare for their employees. To reach diverse employee populations to understand their needs and benefits usage, surveys were deployed in Spanish and Cambodian languages.

Key recommendations included:

- Expanding the maternity leave policy to be a more inclusive parental leave policy, covering adopted, surrogate, nonbinary, and same-sex couples, and incorporating fathers and nonbinary individuals.
- Implementing gender-affirming care policies and helped integrate inclusive language into healthcare documents.
- Developing a flexible work-from-home and hybrid policy.
- Offering employees healthcare plan options beyond the default, including credits for health plan exchanges.

Additionally, we educated employees and brokers on accessing wellness and mental health plans and providing healthcare information in multiple languages to enhance accessibility.

Incorporating principles of equity into the organization's approach to employee healthcare, led to:

Increased Employee Satisfaction and Inclusivity: Expanding the parental leave policy and introducing gender-affirming care created a more inclusive environment, leading to higher employee satisfaction and retention, particularly among nonbinary, LGBTQ+, and diverse family structures.

Improved Access to Healthcare: Offering healthcare plan options, including credits for health plan exchanges, allowed employees greater flexibility in choosing plans that best suited their needs, improving access to healthcare and enhancing overall employee well-being.

Enhanced Cultural Competency and Engagement: By deploying surveys in Spanish and Cambodian and providing healthcare information in multiple languages, the company demonstrated a commitment to serving its diverse workforce, leading to better employee engagement and more equitable access to benefits and resources.

11. Advising on the inclusion of diversity best practices in the investment industry.

We have a strong track record of advising investment firms on incorporating DEI best practices. We understand the unique dynamics of the investment industry and have effectively communicated the direct connection between DEI and strong investment performance. We emphasized to clients that DEI is not merely a box to tick for social responsibility; it's a strategic lever for maximizing investment returns. We present research demonstrating that companies with strong DEI practices often outperform their peers, resonating with clients because diverse teams make better decisions and are more innovative. Below is an example of how we advised on DEI practices in the investment industry.

**Global wealth management and investment banking company:** The organization struggled to attract underrepresented talent for hire and experienced higher turnover among its female investment bankers and employees of color. We developed and rolled out a series of live DEI trainings with 500 bankers across all levels to equip them with the knowledge and skills to create and maintain inclusive environments. It addressed biases, helped them understand diverse perspectives, and equipped them with the knowledge to foster a workplace where everyone felt valued, respected, and had equal opportunities. The training also included a deep dive into the tangible benefits of DEI for their clients, including how to integrate DEI analysis into their due diligence processes to identify and mitigate risks and develop more informed investment decisions, improve portfolio performance, and enhance their employer value proposition to attract and retain top talent.

We also helped them develop a mentorship program and created a guide for establishing employee resource groups, as there was a higher rate of voluntary attrition among younger employees of color. By developing a mentorship program specifically for employees of color, we helped the firm reduce its associate turnover rate from 60% to 35%. Mentorship provided crucial support, guidance, and networking opportunities, enabling employees to navigate career advancement effectively.

12. Advising on DEI best practices for public sector organizations that are consistent with federal and state law, including Section 31 of Article I of the California Constitution (commonly known as "Proposition 209").

Advising on DEI best practices for public sector organizations in California, particularly in light of Proposition 209, is essential because it involves navigating legal restrictions while promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Since Proposition 209 prohibits state institutions from considering race, sex, or ethnicity in public employment, education, and contracting, we would develop recommendations that foster inclusivity while balancing these requirements. This involves focusing on race-neutral approaches, such as expanding outreach to underrepresented communities, implementing equitable hiring practices, and fostering an inclusive culture. Providing reports and recommendations tailored to comply with Proposition 209 ensures that organizations can advance DEI without violating legal mandates.

Specifically, we would:



- Develop hiring and recruitment practices that focus on socioeconomic background, geographic location, and educational disparities, ensuring opportunities for historically underrepresented groups. Develop programs that support candidates from underfunded schools, veterans, or first-generation professionals.
- Implement policies to ensure equitable access to mentorship, professional development, and training opportunities for all employees.
- Ensure health equity by designing inclusive health and wellness programs that address disparities affecting all employees, particularly based on income, geographic location, and access to care. Offer universal benefits, including mental health support, flexible work arrangements, and programs that address social determinants of health, to ensure all employees can access quality care and wellness resources without discrimination.
- Use data to understand gaps in employee advancement and focus on merit-based strategies that reward skills, achievements, and potential. Promote transparency in promotions and pay to ensure fairness.
- Focus investment decisions on companies that align with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals, which include factors such as corporate governance, labor practices, and sustainability.

These are some of the approaches that we would take to help CalPERs create an inclusive and equitable culture without violating Proposition 209.

### 13. Developing communication strategies highlighting the importance of DEI.

Developing communication strategies that highlight the importance of DEI is essential for fostering a culture of inclusion and accountability. Effective communication ensures that all employees understand the organization's commitment to DEI, the value it brings, and how they can contribute. The approach involves creating clear and consistent messaging across platforms, using inclusive language, and tailoring content to diverse audiences. Regular updates, success stories, and transparent progress reporting further reinforce the importance of DEI, aligning the entire organization toward shared goals of diversity and equity.

Below is an example of how we helped an organization develop communication strategies highlighting the importance of DEI.

**National Mid-Market Management Consulting Firm:** We spearheaded a collaborative effort with the Chief Diversity Officer and Marketing Director to craft and execute a dynamic internal and external communications strategy and calendar for their firm's DE&I initiatives. Our aim was to not only boost awareness among employees and clients about their DE&I activities but also to foster a more inclusive culture. We set specific communication goals and closely monitored employee engagement to gauge the impact of our DE&I messaging. Our strategy encompassed a diverse range of communication mediums, including newsletter articles, podcasts, townhall updates, CEO messages, office hours, and the company website, ensuring that we reached employees across the board.

The topics that we communicated about included:

- Progress updates on DEI goals and strategy, key metrics (e.g., representation, pay equity), and areas where the organization is making improvements.
- Special DEI related initiatives such as the BIPOC sponsorship program and time off for voting.
- CEO responses to racial crises. We also designed a checklist to help the organization decide when to address racial crises happening in the country.
- Cultural holidays and heritage months and company-wide events celebrating those events.
- Sharing information about ERGs, how employees could participate and events that they held so employees could participate.
- DEI-related training sessions, workshops, and learning opportunities that focused on bias mitigation, allyship and inclusive leadership.
- Updates on benefit programs and policies that promote work-life balance, accessibility, inclusive benefits, and support for underrepresented groups.

Furthermore, we developed an inclusive language guide to avoid stereotyping, discriminatory and biased messaging in company communications.



## DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

CalPERS Board of Administration requires contract participation from certified Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs) in its contract process, unless specifically exempted. Only State of California, Office of Small Business and DVBE Services (OSDS) may certify a DVBE. The DVBE must perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation to be considered compliant with the DVBE program requirements. In order to obtain DVBE incentive participation credit, the contractor must be a certified DVBE **or** subcontract with a DVBE, certified by OSDS, **no later than** the Final Filing Date as specified in the Schedule of Events.

**Please read the following requirements carefully. Completion of this document is required regardless of intent to pursue DVBE incentive participation.**

### **DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this DVBE incentive participation, the following definitions apply:

**Disabled veteran** means a veteran of the military, naval, or air services of the United States with a **service-connected disability of ten percent or more**, who is a resident of the State of California.

**DVBE** means a business concern certified by OSDS as meeting all of the following:

1. A sole proprietorship at least 51 percent owned by one or more disabled veterans; or in the case of a publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of its stock is owned by one or more disabled veterans; a subsidiary which is wholly owned by a parent corporation, but only if at least 51 percent of the voting stock of the parent corporation is owned by one or more disabled veterans; or a joint venture in which at least 51 percent of the joint venture's management and control and earnings are held by one or more disabled veterans.
2. The management and control of the daily business operations are by one or more disabled veterans. The disabled veterans who exercise management and control are not required to be the same disabled veterans as the owners of the business concern.
3. It is a sole proprietorship, corporation, or partnership with its home office located in the United States, which is not a branch or subsidiary of a foreign corporation, foreign firm, or other foreign based business.

**Note:** View certification information at <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/PD/About/Page-Content/PD-Branch-Intro-Accordion-List/OSDS/OSDS> or contact the OSDS at (916) 375-4940.

**Commercially Useful Function** A DVBE contractor, subcontractors, or supplier is considered performing a commercially useful function when it meets all of the following criteria:

1. The business concern is:
  - (a) Responsible for the execution of a distinct element of the work of the contract;
  - (b) Carries out its obligation by actually performing, managing, or supervising the work involved;
  - (c) Performs work that is normal for its business, services and function; and
2. The business concern is not further subcontracting a greater portion of the work that is greater than would be expected by normal industry practices.

A contractor, subcontractor, or supplier will not be considered to perform a commercially useful function if the contractor's, subcontractor's, or supplier's role is limited to that of an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of small business, microbusiness, or DVBE participation. When subcontracting to small, micro, or DVBE subcontractors, the intent is for the subcontractor to provide goods or services required for the performance of the contract rather than artificial or incidental participation that provides an "appearance" of participation to meet the socio-economic objectives of these programs.

#### **DVBE PARTICIPATION OPTIONS AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be **responsive** to the incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation and select one of the following options:

**Option A – DVBE Incentive.** A bidder may submit DVBE participation percentages to receive and qualify for the incentive program. Bids that fail to submit the required form and confirm the level of DVBE participation will not be eligible to receive the DVBE incentive. **Refer to RFP, Section V Proposal Requirements, A(8) Technical Proposal/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation and Incentive.**

**Option B- No DVBE Incentive Participation.** A bidder may opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

#### **USE/SUBSTITUTION OF PROPOSED DVBE**

If awarded the contract, the successful bidder must use the DVBE subcontractor and/or supplier proposed in their final bid/proposal unless the contractor requests substitution via prior written notice to CalPERS and CalPERS approves such substitution. At a minimum, the request must include:

- A. A written explanation for the substitution;
- B. The identity of the person or firm substituted;
- C. Any change in the work or dollar/percentage amount caused by the substitution; and
- D. A revised DVBE Contract Participation (Attachment G, Exhibit 1) and applicable certification(s).

The request and CalPERS approval or disapproval of the substitution shall not affect compliance with any other provision of law, or any other contract requirements relating to substitution of subcontractors.

## **QUESTIONS**

The information below is provided to answer commonly asked questions and clarify potential misconceptions of the contract participation goal requirement. If further clarification is necessary, you may contact CalPERS Contracts Officer at (916) 795-3020 or [oscd\\_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov](mailto:oscd_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov) for assistance.

### **Meeting the Goal**

- 1. Proposing incentive goal attainment is a commitment to use disabled veteran business enterprises for the established percent of the contract amount. If awarded a contract, CalPERS expects the DVBE subcontractors or suppliers to be utilized as identified in your proposal, unless a substitution is approved by CalPERS.
- 2. An expression of intent to subcontract with unidentified DVBE firms at some future date is insufficient to comply with DVBE incentive participation. Commitments must be finalized upon submission of your contract participation documentation to CalPERS.
- 3. **Out-of-state firms** are not excluded from participating in the DVBE incentive program. To do business with CalPERS, completion of this document is required for all bidders.



## DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

In order to be responsive to incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation. Check the appropriate box to indicate the option with which you choose to comply. Please read all instructions carefully prior to completing this form. **Only California certified DVBEs who perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation may be used to satisfy the DVBE program requirements.**

This solicitation does **not** have a DVBE participation requirement; however, you may still commit to an incentive percentage to obtain preference points.

☐ **Option A -** I commit to the percent listed below to qualify for the DVBE incentive program.

☐ 1% - 1.99%

☐ 2% - 2.99%

☐ 3% - 3.99%

☐ 4% - 4.99%

☐ 5% or Over

☒ **Option B –** I opt out of participating in the DVBE incentive program.

---

In order to meet the DVBE participation requirement, list one or more DVBE vendors and the work to be performed.

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

☐ I commit to utilizing one or more of the DVBEs listed above in order to meet the total claimed DVBE% indicated, and certify that the DVBE vendor(s) listed above have been notified and agree to provide services for this contract.

Total DVBE % \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

---

☒ I opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

Tiffany Perry

6/25/2025

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## List of Proposed Subcontractors

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this attachment. Please check the applicable box. (A photo copy of this form is acceptable if additional sheets are required.)

- ☐ No subcontractors will be used.
- ☐ No subcontractors will be used other than the DVBE firms identified on Attachment G, Exhibit 1.
- ☒ The following subcontractors will be employed and will perform the work or services identified below.
- ☐ Non-small business preference to be applied by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.
- 

Company Name: FosterWe LLC

Contact Name: Marcos Goldstein

Telephone Number: (206) 909-3087

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:  
4319 NE 70th Ave, Portland OR 97218

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:  
Lead planning, design and facilitation of action planning sessions to develop action plan recommendations in phase 3.

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:  
13%

---

Company Name: JRO & Associates, LLC d/b/a "Verk Vibe"

Contact Name: Jon Orozco

Telephone Number: 562-613-8096

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:  
1150 Iron Point Road, Suite 100, Folsom, California 95630

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:  
Facilitate leader interviews and focus groups and co-create assessment and action plan recommendations.

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:  
30%

---

1 If your firm is claiming the non-small business preference by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor



**Required Attachments Certification Checklist**

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**

**Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420**

Firm's Name: Amberus Partners

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this Attachment. Complete the "Proposer Certification" column and submit this checklist to confirm the items submitted with your Proposal. CalPERS staff will use the shaded "CalPERS Verification" column to confirm receipt of all required documents.

| Attachment Name/Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Proposer Certification                                                 | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted Cover Letter signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.<br>a. A statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer good for 180 calendar days.<br>b. A statement expressing the Proposer's willingness to perform the services as described in this RFP.<br>c. A statement expressing the Proposer's availability of staff and other required resources for performing all services and providing all deliverables as described in the RFP. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment of Proposal packages as specified in the RFP.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF marked <b>"Master Copy"</b> containing original signatures.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment marked <b>"Reproduction Copy."</b> All pages containing proprietary information should be removed and a cover sheet must be included which provides:<br>1. the firm's names;<br>2. total number of pages; and<br>3. identification of all pages removed due to proprietary information.<br><b>Note: Entire proposal may not be marked confidential and proprietary.</b>                                                                                                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Minimum Qualifications Certification (Attachment A) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Proposal/Proposer Certification Sheet (Attachment B) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.<br>Small Business certified? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br>DVBE certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br>Micro Business certified? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

*Technical Proposal to the California Public Employees' Retirement System – Amberus Partners  
Diversity Equity & Inclusion Consulting Services*

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                        |                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration (Attachment C) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contracting Act Declarations (Attachment D) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contract-Related Disclosure Form (Attachment E) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Proposal Questionnaire (Attachment F)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation (Attachment G, including Exhibit 1)</p> <p>Option A - Meets DVBE Participation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option B - DVBE Incentive Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option C – Elected no DVBE participation? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Option D – California Certified Micro Business? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>List of Proposed Subcontractors (Attachment H) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Required Attachments Certification Checklist (Attachment I)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Joint Venture proposal?</p> <p>If yes, was documentation submitted describing the responsibilities of each party in the Joint Venture, Exhibit 1? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Preference Program request?</p> <p>Small Business Preference claimed? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Target Area Contract Preference Act claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Is the Corporation registered and in good standing to do business? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Submit current copy of a Secretary of State Certification or Business License<br/>(Check the California Secretary of State website at <a href="https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business">https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business</a> to verify status)</p> <p>Is the company an LLP? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted the Fee Proposal (Attachment J) in a separate document in the Proposal package email. Fee Proposal clearly labeled as <b>“FEE PROPOSAL FOR RFP NO. 2024-9375, submitted by [YOUR COMPANY NAME].”</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

| Verifications Performed by CalPERS Staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Has Contractor been decertified by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing?<br>(Check the California Regulatory Notice Register at<br><a href="https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/">https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/</a> ) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of CalPERS Reviewer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Business License

| CITY OF GLENDALE                                                        |                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BUSINESS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE                                       |                                                                           |
| <b>Business Name:</b> Tiffany Perry Consulting LLC                      | <b>Registration No.:</b> BRC-001937-2024                                  |
| <b>DBA:</b> Amberus Partners                                            | <b>Date of Issue:</b> March 10, 2025                                      |
| <b>Street Address:</b> 655 N CENTRAL AVENUE FL 17<br>GLENDALE, CA 91203 | <b>Expiration Date:</b> March 1, 2026                                     |
| <b>Owners:</b> Tiffany Perry                                            | <b>Occupancy Floor Area (sq. ft.):</b> 200<br><b>Use:</b> General, Office |

This certifies that, so far as ascertained by, or made known to the Director of Community Development, the named business complies with the applicable zoning regulations of the City of Glendale. If the named business fails to comply with the zoning or other municipal code regulations of the City, it may result in legal action by the City including, but not limited to, revocation of this certificate.

The issuance of this certificate does not relieve the owner, tenant and/or applicant from their legal obligations to obtain any and all necessary permits and/or complying with other applicable local, state, and federal regulations that may apply to their use and/or business.

Starting January 1, 2021, Assembly Bill 1607 requires the prevention of gender-based discrimination of business establishments. A full notice is available in English or other languages by going to: <https://www.dca.ca.gov/publications/>

THIS CERTIFICATE MUST BE POSTED IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE IN THE BUSINESS NAMED/ADDRESSED ABOVE.

# REPRODUCTION COPY COVER SHEET

**California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)**

**Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420**

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**

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**Firm Names:** TKM Consulting, LLC and Set-Up-For Success

**Total Number of Pages:** 55

**Pages Removed Due to Proprietary Information:** None

This Reproduction Copy contains the complete proposal submission with no proprietary information removed. All pages from the original Master Copy have been included in this reproduction version.

The original proposal did not contain any information marked as proprietary or confidential that required removal for public disclosure purposes.

June 29, 2025

TO: Contracts Officer  
California Public Employees' Retirement System

FROM: **TKM Consulting and Set-Up-For Success**  
1830 Springs Road, Suite 243  
Vallejo, Ca 94591

RE: Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420  
Response to CalPers RFP 2024-9420: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consulting Services

Dear CalPERS Contracts Officer,

*"Equity costs little in dollars and worth everything in creating environments entrenched with pathways for access, belonging, opportunity, and sustained success."*

- Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell, CEO Set-Up for Success

TKM Consulting & Set-Up for Success are excited to submit our proposal in response to the call for California Public Employees' Retirement System Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services, Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420, and are willing to perform the services as described in this RFP.

CalPERS, as a global leader and service provider of more than 2 million members, stands at a pivotal moment in history. While some companies have stepped back from commitments to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programming exists within their organizations, the CalPERS Board of Administration and its leadership have made it clear that they are on a mission to continue their momentum to implement a "fully integrated, best-in-class DEI program" that innovates and sustains within a non-discriminatory framework and adherence to all statutory laws thereof.

TKM Consulting, in partnership with Set-Up for Success, has over 40+ years of experience working in, with, and beside organizations to integrate innovative and sustainable DEI frameworks, crisis and change management strategy, risk-intelligent and human-centric approaches to organizational health and wellness. Our approach honors where you are while building toward where you want to be.

We bring deep expertise in organizational change management, but we also bring humility about what only you can know about your organization, your employees, members, and your stakeholders. This work requires genuine partnership—our knowledge of DEI Integration, change processes combined with your knowledge of CalPERS.



We are committed to leaving you stronger, not dependent. Every recommendation is designed to build internal capacity. Every tool we introduce comes with transfer of knowledge to your team. Every process we facilitate is structured to enhance your organization's ability to continue learning and growing.

Most importantly, we believe in CalPERS' mission and the people who make it happen. This engagement is about honoring the strengths you've already built while creating the conditions for even greater impact. We're here to enhance the work you're already committed to doing—just more strategically, sustainably, and effectively.

CalPERS has an opportunity to demonstrate what principled, effective DEI work looks like when it's integrated into organizational culture rather than treated as a program to be maintained or abandoned based on external political winds. We are ready to partner with you in making that vision real.

TKM consulting and Set-up for Success are more than willing and capable to perform the services as described in the Request for Proposals (RFP).

Our proposed approach fully aligns with CalPERS' defined four-phase scope of work as outlined in Section III of the RFP. Below, we map our process directly to the contract deliverables:

- **Phase I: Discovery – Stakeholder Listening & Landscape Assessment**

This phase responds directly to **RFP Phase I: Leadership Interviews**, and includes structured interviews with all 12 members of the CalPERS Board of Administration and executive leadership (CEO, COO, CHRO, Chief Operating Investment Officer, Health Director). We utilize pre-surveys, role-specific interview protocols, and qualitative coding methods to surface meaningful themes and areas for exploration.

- **Phase II: DEI Framework & Organizational Health Assessment**

Aligning with **RFP Phase II: Program Review & Assessment**, we conduct a comprehensive review of CalPERS' DEI programming, policies, and practices. This includes a customized organizational health assessment and benchmarking against public, nonprofit, and corporate DEI leaders. We perform a legal and reputational environmental scan to assess compliance and risk factors across relevant statutes (e.g., Proposition 209, ADA, ESG standards).

- **Phase III: DEI Strategy & Action Plan Development**

Consistent with **RFP Phase III: Action Plan Recommendations**, we deliver a co-created DEI strategic plan that includes measurable goals aligned with CalPERS' 5-Year Strategic Plan, fiduciary duty, and governance model. The action plan includes implementation strategies, legal alignment considerations, and will be presented in an open session Board meeting.

- **Phase IV: Capacity Building & Implementation Support**

This phase delivers on **RFP Phase IV: Action Plan Implementation**. We offer strategic advisory support, resource alignment, leadership development, implementation plans, and internal

communications guidance. Our approach focuses on building CalPERS' internal capacity to sustain and measure DEI progress over time through clear action planning, reporting protocols and knowledge transfer.

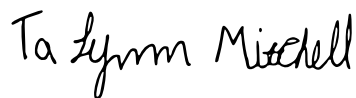
Each phase is carefully designed to not only fulfill but enhance CalPERS' expectations through a legally compliant, research-informed, and values-aligned consulting engagement.

Our team, including Ta Lynn Mitchell Lead Consultant, Dr. Mia Settles Tidwell Lead Consultant, Janine Lindsey Legal Consultant, Dr. Kawami Evans Data Analyst, and Bill Thompson Pension Investment Consultant, Dij Jayaratna Project Manager, is available and fully resourced to support this work over the 3-year period outlined. We are organizational consultant experts who believe deeply in building the capacity of client-leaders, their employees, and leveraging diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and lived experiences to inform recommendations. Simply, we translate assessment findings into comprehensive, contextualized, and values-aligned action plans that drive sustainable organizational transformation.

Our team's expertise in delivering context-embedded recommendations, which employ an implementation strategy that considers DEI initiatives in full compliance with California's constitutional, statutory and legal framework for non-discrimination, particularly Section 31 of Article I of the California Constitution (Proposition 209), Senate Bill 54; chapter 495, Americans with Disability Act (ADA), Senate Bill 826 corporate board diversity mandates, ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) policies specific to pension programs, makes us a stand out consulting organization that surpasses other agencies.

We are confident that we are the organization to deliver a high- quality set of recommendations and an implementation strategy that seamlessly integrates CalPERS DEI Program and achieve outstanding results. We are eager to discuss this proposal further and explore how we can help CalPERS achieve its goals of: providing a quality member experience, strengthening and sustaining the pension program, offering high-quality and accessible healthcare, engaging various stakeholders and achieving organizational excellence.

Our proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer good for 180 calendar days. TaLynn Mitchell, CEO of TKM Consulting, and Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell, CEO of Set-Up for Success, are authorized to bind their respective organizations contractually. We look forward to the opportunity to partner with you on this project. Thank you in advance for your consideration of our response to your proposal.



TKM Consulting, CEO



Set-Up for Success, CEO

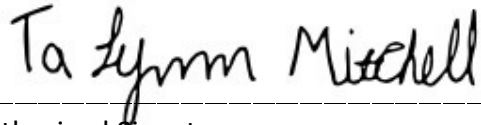
**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Minimum Qualifications Certification**

As prescribed in the Minimum Qualifications, Section IV, of the Request for Proposal (RFP), all Proposers are required to sign and return this Attachment, along with written evidence of how each qualification is met on Attachment A, Exhibit 1, Evidence of Minimum Qualifications. The undersigned hereby certifies that the firm submitting this response fulfills the minimum qualifications outlined below, as well as the requirements contained in the RFP.

**Minimum Qualifications include:**

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.
- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.
- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.
- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least one (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.
- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**



Authorized Signature

06/20/20205

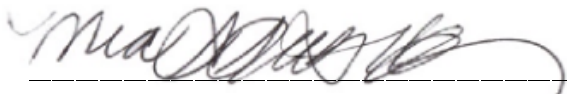
Date

TKM Consulting

Name of Firm

Ta Lynn Mitchell, CEO

Name and Title (Please Print)



Authorized Signature

06/20/20205

Date

Set-Up-For Success

Name of Firm

Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell, CEO

Name and Title (Please Print)

### Evidence of Minimum Qualifications

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.

| Organization Name                   | Years of Operation             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| TKM Consulting & Set-Up for Success | 40 years of combined operation |

- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.

| Firm                                                    | Years of Experience | Type                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Contact Person                                                                                                                           | Contact Information                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| City of Richmond                                        | 9 years             | Governmental                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Shasa Curl,<br>City Manager                                                                                                              | Ph: 510-932-4890<br>Email:<br>Shasa_Curl@ci.richmond<br>.ca.ua                                                           |
| University of<br>California, Office of<br>the President | 10 years            | Corporate (as the<br>system-wide<br>administrative entity<br>that operates as a<br>corporate structure)<br><br><i>Note: While individual UC<br/>campuses operate as public<br/>institutions, the UC Office of</i> | Paul Williams,<br>Chief Procurement<br>Officer and Associate<br>Vice President<br><br>Dr. Yvette Gullatt, Vice<br>President for Graduate | Ph: 510-987-9532<br>Email:<br><a href="mailto:paul.williams@ucop.edu">paul.williams@ucop.edu</a><br><br>Ph: 510-407-0017 |

|                    |          |                                                                                                                                 |                                  |                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------|----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                    |          | <i>the President functions as the corporate administrative entity for the system-wide organization with over 500 employees.</i> | and Undergraduate Affairs        | Email:<br><a href="mailto:vpguea@ucop.edu">vpguea@ucop.edu</a> or<br><a href="mailto:yvette.gulatt@ucop.edu">yvette.gulatt@ucop.edu</a> |
| Spencer Foundation | 10 years | Private Foundation                                                                                                              | Na'ilah Suad Nasir,<br>President | Ph: 312-213-9466<br>Email:<br>nsnasir@spencer.org                                                                                       |

- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.

| Firm                                                                      | Years of Experience | Type                 | Contact Person                                   | Contact Information                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| University of California, Irvine Health                                   | 1 year              | Public               | Josephine Jorge-Reyes,<br>Vice President Nursing | Ph: 714-467-0071<br>Email:jjorgere@hs.uci.edu |
| BRAVE Bay Area, in partnership with Highland Hospital and TriValley Haven | 2 Years             | Nonprofit and Public | Leah Kimble-Price,<br>Executive Director         | Ph: 510-430-1298<br>Email:leah@bawar.org      |

|                                    |         |        |                                                               |                                                     |
|------------------------------------|---------|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| CSU, Sacramento State              | 3 Years | Public | Mellonie Richardson,<br>Director of Talent Acquisition        | Ph: 916-835-0939<br>Email:<br>m.richardson@csus.edu |
| University of California, Berkeley | 6 years | Public | Fabrizio Mejia,<br>Interim Vice Chancellor Equity & Inclusion | Ph: 510-847-6623<br>Email:<br>fmejia@berkeley.edu   |

- D. As of the RFP release date, at least one (1) of the Key Personnel dedicated to the CalPERS contract must have at least one (1) year of experience in providing consultation services to the board of a pension fund (public, non-profit, or private) or corporate board within the past five (5) years.

| <b>Firm</b>        | <b>Years of Experience</b> | <b>Type</b> | <b>Contact Person</b>           | <b>Contact Information</b>                                |
|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| TKM Consulting     | 15                         | Private     | Talynn Mitchell, CEO            | Ph: 510-316-9366<br>Email:<br>talynn@tkmconsultingllc.com |
| Set-Up for Success | 25                         | Private     | Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell,<br>CEO | Ph: 916-957-9610<br>Email:<br>setup4succeeded@gmail.com   |
|                    |                            |             |                                 |                                                           |

- E. As of the RFP release date, the firm must have at least one (1) current public pension fund client or corporate client. Public pension fund experience is highly desired.

| Firm                                                 | Type                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Contact Person                                                                                                                                                     | Contact Information                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| University of California,<br>Office of the President | Corporate (as the<br>system-wide administrative<br>entity that operates as a<br>corporate structure)<br><br><i>Note: While individual UC campuses<br/>operate as public institutions, the UC<br/>Office of the President functions as<br/>the corporate administrative entity for<br/>the system-wide organization.</i> | Dr. Yvette Gullatt, Vice<br>President for Graduate and<br>Undergraduate Affairs<br><br>Paul Williams,<br>Chief Procurement Officer<br>and Associate Vice President | Ph: 510-407-0017<br>Email: <a href="mailto:vpguea@ucop.edu">vpguea@ucop.edu</a> or<br><a href="mailto:yvette.gulatt@ucop.edu">yvette.gulatt@ucop.edu</a><br><br>Ph: 510-987-9532<br>Email: paul.williams@ucop.edu |
|                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |



## **Evidence of Minimum Qualifications - Explanatory Text**

### **A. Organization Operation Requirement (At least 1 year)**

**How this qualification is met:** TKM Consulting & Set-Up for Success have a combined total of 40+ years of operation. TKM Consulting, LLC has been in continuous operation since 2022, and Set-Up for Success has been operating since 2015. Together, our joint venture partnership significantly exceeds the minimum one-year operational requirement, bringing a decade of established business experience to this engagement and over 35 years of professional experience.

### **B. DEI Consulting Experience (Minimum 3 years with progressive scope)**

**How this qualification is met:** Our joint venture demonstrates extensive DEI consulting experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organizational complexity over the past decade. Evidence includes:

- **TKM Consulting:** 15+ years of DEI implementation in regulated systems, including work with UC system institutions, government agencies, and educational organizations
- **Set-Up for Success:** 25+ years of organizational development and DEI consulting across corporate, educational, municipal, and nonprofit sectors
- **Progressive complexity demonstrated through:** Large-scale transformations affecting over 131,000 students, strategic restructures securing \$7 million in annual funding, and comprehensive surveys reaching over 40,000 participants

Our combined experience encompasses all required elements: assessing (comprehensive program evaluations), advising (board-level strategic guidance), strategic planning (multi-year DEI frameworks), training (executive coaching & leadership development programs), and developing best-practice DEI programs (implementation across diverse organizational contexts).

### **C. Consultation Services Experience (Minimum 3 years across sectors)**

**How this qualification is met:** Our partnership provides extensive consultation services across all required sectors:

#### **Public Sector Experience:**

- City of Richmond (9 years) - Municipal governmental DEI implementation
- University of California system campuses (6-10 years) - Public higher education

- California State University, Sacramento (3 years) - Public education
- Oakland Unified School District (23 years)- Public K-12 education

**Nonprofit Experience:**

- Spencer Foundation (10 years) - Private foundation strategic consultation
- Beyond Emancipation Board (4 years) - Nonprofit governance
- Code Nation (4 years) - Technology education nonprofit transformation

**Private/Corporate Experience:**

- University of California, Office of the President (10 years) - Corporate administrative entity
- Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine (1 year) - Healthcare education institution

Our consultation services have specifically addressed organizational redesign, culture transformation, talent management optimization, fiscal solvency and equity-based budgeting, and both internal and external-facing business practice enhancement across all sectors.

**D. Board/Pension Fund Experience (Minimum 1 year within past 5 years)**

**How this qualification is met:** Both key personnel exceed this requirement:

- **TKM Consulting:** 15 years of experience providing consultation services to private sector boards and corporate governance structures working with California pension fund entities.
- **Set-Up for Success:** 25 years of experience in board consultation across private, corporate, and institutional contexts working with California pension fund entities.

Additionally, our extensive experience with the Board of Regents for both the California State University System and University of California System demonstrates direct expertise in large-scale institutional governance consultation, including work with boards overseeing pension and benefit systems for hundreds of thousands of employees.

**E. Current Client Requirement (Public pension fund or corporate client)**

**How this qualification is met:** University of California, Office of the President serves as our current corporate client. While individual UC campuses operate as public institutions, the UC Office of the President functions as the corporate administrative entity for the system-wide organization with over 500 employees, managing systemwide operations including employee benefits, procurement, and strategic initiatives.

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

3 of 3

**Contact Information:**

- Dr. Yvette Gullatt, Vice President for Graduate and Undergraduate Affairs: (510) 407-0017, [vpguea@ucop.edu](mailto:vpguea@ucop.edu)
- Paul Williams, Chief Procurement Officer and Associate Vice President: (510) 987-9532, [paul.williams@ucop.edu](mailto:paul.williams@ucop.edu)

This ongoing engagement demonstrates our current capacity to serve large-scale institutional clients with complex operational and fiduciary responsibilities and pension programs (e.g. CalPERS, California State Teacher Retirement System (CalSTRS), UC Retirement System, etc.).

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## PROPOSAL/PROPOSER CERTIFICATION SHEET

### 1. Designation of Official Contact Person

The individual to whom all information and correspondence regarding this RFP should be transmitted is:

Firm Name: TKM Consulting, LLC

Contact Name and Title: Ta Lynn Mitchell, CEO

Address: 1830 Springs Road # 243, Vallejo CA 94591

Phone Number: (925) 464-1429

Fax Number:

E-Mail Address: talynn@tkmconsultingllc.com

### 2. Indicate your organization type:

- ☐ Limited Liability Company
- ☐ Partnership
- ☒ Joint Venture (If checked, attach required documentation. See "Exhibit 1")
- ☐ Limited Liability Corporation
- ☐ Corporation (Corporation Number \_\_\_\_\_)
- ☐ Sole Proprietorship

3. Federal Employer ID No. (FEIN): 92-0383531

4. California Corporation Number:

5. Are you certified with the Department of General Services, Office of Small Business and DVBE Certification as:

- |                                         |                                         |                                        |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| a. California Small Business            | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| b. Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise | Yes <input type="checkbox"/>            | No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c. California Micro Business            | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/>            |

**NOTE:** A copy of your Certification is required to be included if either of the above items is checked "Yes"

### 6. Statement of Compliance

Proposer has, unless exempted, complied with the State of California's requirements pertaining to the development, implementation, and maintenance of the nondiscrimination program. (California Government Code section 12990 (a-f) and Title 2, California Code of Regulations, section 8103, et. seq.)

**7. Does your Proposal contain Proprietary Information?**

Yes ☐ No ☒ (If yes, attach a separate sheet to this certification which specifically itemizes the section(s) marked as "proprietary information". See "Submission of Proposals".)

**8. Reproduction Copy**

The total number of pages contained in the "Copy for Reproduction": \_\_\_\_\_ (See "Submission of Proposals".)

**9. Contract Execution Information**

If awarded a contract, the individual to whom the contract should be transmitted is:

Contact Name and Title: Ta Lynn Mitchell

Address: 1830 Springs Road, #243, Vallejo, Ca 94589

Phone Number: (925) 464-1429

Fax Number:

E-Mail Address: talynn@tkmconsultingllc.com

The name of the company officer authorized to sign this contract is:

Name and Title: Ta Lynn Mitchell

Address: 1830 Springs Road, #243, Vallejo, Ca 94589

Phone Number: (925) 464-1429

Fax Number:

E-Mail Address: talynn@tkmconsultingllc.com

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**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this informationX.**

Ta Lynn Mitchell 06-29-2025  
Authorized Signature Date

Ta Lynn Mitchell, CEO TKM Consulting  
Name and Title (Please Print)

Mia Settles-Tidwell 06-29-2025  
Authorized Signature Date

Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell, CEO Set-Up-For Success  
Name and Title (Please Print)



**California Public Employees' Retirement System**

**California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration**

Firm's Name: TKM Consulting, LLC

The firm named above certifies, that the firm is eligible to contract with the State of California and CalPERS, pursuant to the provisions of the California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act of 2003 (Public Contract Code section 10286 et. seq.).

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

|                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Ta Lynn Mitchell</u> | <u>06-29-2025</u> |
| Authorized Signature    | Date              |

Ta Lynn Mitchell, CEO TKM Consulting  
Name and Title (Please Print)

|                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <u>Mia Settles-Tidwell</u> | <u>06-29-2025</u> |
| Authorized Signature       | Date              |

Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell, CEO Set-Up-For Success  
Name and Title (Please Print)



## **California Public Employees' Retirement System**

### **Contracting Act Declarations**

CalPERS is prohibited from contracting with individuals or firms who do business subject to the following statutes. By signing this form, you are certifying that you or your firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, a state agency.

#### **Sudan Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477, a bidder or proposer who is a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm does not currently have, and has not had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, and in accordance with Public Contract Code section 10478, this firm hereby certifies it is not a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).
- ☐ This firm is a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), but has received written permission from the Department of General Services (DGS) to submit a bid or proposal pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477(b). A copy of the written permission from DGS is included with the firm's bid or proposal.
- ☐ This firm currently has, or has had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, but hereby certifies that is not a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).

#### **Iran Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to the Iran Contracting Act of 2010 (Public Contract Code section 2201, et. seq.), if a bidder, at the time of the bid or proposal for a new contract, or renewal of an existing contract, has engaged<sup>1</sup> investment activities in Iran (as described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5) is ineligible, and shall not, bid on, submit a proposal for, or enter into or renew a contract with a

---

<sup>1</sup> Or such person is identified on a list created by the Department of General Services pursuant to Section 2203(b) as a person engaging in investment activities in Iran.

public entity for goods or services for one million dollars (\$1,000,000) or more. (Public Contract Code section 2203(a)).

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm, or person, hereby certifies that it (or he or she) is not identified on the DGS list created pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(b) as a firm or person engaging in "investment activities" in Iran described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5(a) or 2202.5(b).
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies it is permitted to submit a bid or proposal to a public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c) because its investment activities in Iran were (1) made before July 1, 2010, (2) were not expanded or renewed after July 1, 2010, and (3) the firm has adopted, publicized, and is implementing a formal plan to cease the investment activities in Iran and to refrain from engaging in any new investments in Iran.
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies that although it is a financial institution that extends twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) or more in credit to another person, for 45 days or more, the person who will use the credit to provide goods or services in the energy sector in Iran is a person permitted to submit a bid or proposal to the public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c). (See Public Contract Code section 2202.3(d)).

**Democratic Republic of the Congo Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10490 and section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)), a scrutinized company (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services related to products or services that are the reason the firm must comply with section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This is not a "scrutinized company" or does not currently use any conflict mineral products that are necessary to the functionality or production of a product manufactured by the firm from the Democratic Republic of the Congo or an "adjoining country" (see 15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)(p)), and section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (Pub.L. No.111-203, (July 21, 2010) 124 Stat. 1376)).
- ☐ This firm has ceased to be regarded as a "scrutinized company" (as defined by Cal. Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) because (1) it is not in violation of section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)(p)); or (2) it has filed an amended or corrective filing under section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which filing corrected the violations; or (3) three years have passed since the date of the final judgment or settlement entered in a civil or administrative action brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).



- ☐ Disclosure requirements have been temporarily waived by the SEC because the President of the United States has transmitted a determination that the waiver or revision is in the national security interest of the United States, or the disclosure requirements have been terminated because the President has determined and certified to the appropriate congressional committees that no armed groups continue to be directly involved and benefitting from this firm's commercial activity involving conflict minerals.

**Unruh Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 2010, a bidder or proposer who proposes to enter into or renew a contract with a state agency with respect to any contract in the amount of \$100,000 or more must certify, under penalty of perjury, at the time the bid or proposal is submitted or the contract is renewed that they are in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, and that any policy that they have against any sovereign nation or peoples recognized by the government of the United States, including, but not limited to, the nation and people of Israel, is not used to discriminate in violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act or the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm certifies that it is in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act, as defined in Public Contract Code Section 2010.

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make these declarations on behalf of the above-named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

Ta Lynn Mitchell  
Authorized Signature

06-29-2025  
Date

Ta Lynn Mitchell, CEO  
Name and Title (Please Print)

TKM Consulting, LLC  
Firm Name (Please Print)

Mia Settles-Tidwell  
Authorized Signature

06-29-2025  
Date

Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell  
Name and Title (Please Print)

CEO Set-Up-For Success  
Firm Name (Please Print)



**CalPERS Contract-Related Disclosure Form**

*(To be used if Contractor is not required to file a  
Placement Agent Information Disclosure Form (2 CCR § 559))*

**This form is to be used for all Contract-Related Disclosures, including Proposals.**

Please refer to title 2 California Code Regulations section 559.1 (b)(1) through (b)(3), prior to completing this form.

a. Solicitation or Contract Number:

RFP 2024-9420

b. Proposer or Contractor Name:

Ta Lynn Mitchell

c. Name of Individual Authorized to bind the Proposer or Contractor:

Ta Lynn Mitchell

d. Contact Person (if different than above):

e. E-mail Address:

talynn@tkmconsultingllc.com

f. Phone No:

925-464-1429

g. Name of CalPERS Contact (if applicable):

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment E

Page 2 of 4

Have you, your firm or your firm's principals, employees, agents, or affiliates compensated or agreed to compensate, directly or indirectly, any Agent as defined in section 559.1(a)(1) (whether or not employed by you) or any entity to act as Agent in connection with this Solicitation or Contract? (§559.1 (b)(1))

☐ Yes. ☒ No.

**If you checked Yes, please respond to questions 1 through 5 below, and sign and date the Form on the final page.**

**If you checked No, please respond to question 5 below, and sign and date this Form on the final page.**

1. Please list the names and relationships for each Agent in connection with the CalPERS Solicitation or Contract, including a description of the relationship with the Proposer or Contractor. (Add an additional page if necessary.) Please check the box to the left if the Agent is a current or former CalPERS Board Member, Staff Member, consultant, or has a Familial Relationship with any such individual.

|                          | Name | Relationship |
|--------------------------|------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |

2. Please attach a copy of all contracts, agreements, or other documents memorializing the relationship between the Proposer or Contractor and the Agent. When an *entity* is retained as an Agent, please also include the requested information for any officer, director, or employee actively providing Agent services with regard to CalPERS or receiving more than 15% of the Agent fees.
3. Provide a description of any financial or Familial Relationship(s) between the Agent and a Board Member or Staff Member, including the names of the Board Member(s) and/or Staff Members:

4. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Agent to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.

5. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Proposer or Contractor to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.

No, we have not contracted or offered anything of value to Board Members or Staff Members within the past 12 months.

By executing this form the undersigned represents and warrants the information set forth herein is true and correct. The undersigned agrees to update this information within 14 calendar days of the date Proposer or Contractor knows or reasonably should have known of any defect or changes to this information.

The Contract-Related Disclosure Form and attachments shall be a public record subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act. No confidentiality restrictions shall be placed on information submitted by the Proposer or Contractor.

The undersigned represents and agrees it shall make a representation and warranty as to the continuing accuracy of this information in any final written agreement between it and CalPERS.

---

I, the official named below, acknowledge and declare I have read and understand CCR section 559.1, and that the above-named firm has provided information required by section 559.1 and this Form. I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above-named firm, and declare the foregoing is true and correct as of the date of execution of this document. I further acknowledge my firm's responsibility to provide updates in the event this information is determined to be incorrect or has changed.

Ta Lynn Mitchell

Authorized Signature

06-26-2025

Date

Ta Lynn Mitchell. CEO

Name and Title

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment E

Page 4 of 4



Authorized Signature

06-29-2025

Date

Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell, CEO Set-Up-For Success

Name and Title (Please Print)

PERS01A0068

(5/2012)

**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Proposal Questionnaire**

**A. ORGANIZATION and BACKGROUND**  
**(Pass/Fail)**

**1. Name of your organization.**

The name of our organization is TKM Consulting & Set-Up for Success.

**2. Location of headquarters.**

We are located at 1830 Springs Road, Ste 243, Vallejo, CA 94591.

**3. Location and address of the branch which would provide services under this contract.**

Worksite established and services will be provided at the branch located at 368 San Marino Avenue, Vallejo, CA 94589.

**4. Number of years your organization has been in business.**

TKM Consulting & Set-Up for Success has a combined total of 40+ years in, with and beside, governmental, corporate, educational, private and non-profit organizations.

**5. Within the past five (5) years, have there been any significant changes in your organization's ownership, corporate officers, or principal business? If yes, please describe.**

No. Within the past five (5) years, TKM Consulting & Set-Up for Success have not had any significant changes in our organization's ownership, corporate officers, or principal business.

**6. Mission statement or statement of your organization's principal business. Please provide a copy of incorporation documents or other public documents that describe the primary focus of your firm.**

Our mission at TKM Consulting and Set-Up for Success is to empower individuals and organizations to thrive by building leadership capacity, fostering organizational health, and co-curating strategic solutions that drive sustainable growth and transformative impact. Through executive coaching, people and leadership development, and customized consulting, we help leaders navigate complex educational, governmental, social, and political landscapes while

cultivating environments where healthy employees and healthy organizations can succeed together.

## **B. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CONSULTING SERVICES CAPABILITIES (Pass/Fail)**

### **1. Providing advisory services on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) best practices.**

We provide advisory services on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) across public, private, and non-profit sectors:

#### **Public:**

- California Conservation Corporation
- California State University, Sacramento and East Bay
- Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine
- City of Richmond, California
- Oakland Unified School District
- West Contra Costa Unified School District
- University of California, Berkeley and Irvine

#### **Private:**

- Spencer Foundation
- University of Tulane

#### **Non-Profit:**

- Code Nation
- Education Policy Fellows Program
- Teach for America- New Orleans and Bay Area

#### **Corporate:**

- California State University System, Chancellor's Office
- University of California, Office of the President

*Note: While individual UC and CSU campuses operate as public institutions, the UC Office of the President and the California State University System, Chancellor's Office function as the corporate administrative entity for the system-wide organization with over 500 employees.*

**Summary of Advisory Services:** Over the past decade, our team has served as trusted DEI advisors across nonprofit, public, private, and governmental sectors, offering strategic guidance rooted in equity, cultural intelligence, and systems change management. We have partnered with educational institutions, state agencies, school districts, corporations, philanthropic foundations, and community-based organizations to build capacity and embed equity into policies, procedures, and practices that drive measurable impact.

Our work includes supporting executive teams in sharpening their DEI lens, developing inclusive hiring and onboarding practices, redesigning workplace culture, and building trauma-informed, psychologically safe environments. We've co-curated frameworks for equitable procurement, launched inclusive leadership training, and advised on justice-focused strategies aligned to California's legal and political landscape.

In K-12 and higher education systems, we've shaped district-wide equity budgeting systems that resulted in over \$1 million in net savings while ensuring equitable resource allocation across 118 schools. We've created scalable DEI action plans with comprehensive frameworks—including 30 goals and 200 action steps with online metric tracking—and supported large-scale initiatives such as UC Berkeley's COVID-19 recovery response and the institutionalization and restructuring of DEI offices and divisions.

Our advisory support has extended to large-scale organizational transformations affecting over 131,000 students, 7,200 faculty, and 20,000 staff at multiple institutions, strategic restructures that secured \$7 million in annual strategic equity funding at UC Berkeley, and comprehensive surveys reaching over 40,000 participants. We've facilitated affinity group accelerator programming, cultural intelligence training for leadership cohorts, and guided cross-departmental change management processes for ADA compliance and accessibility.

## **2. Providing education and training on DEI matters to Boards of Trustees.**

We provide comprehensive DEI education and training to governing boards across public sector institutions:



**Public:**

- Board of Regents, California State University System
- Board of Regents, University of California System
- City Council, City of Richmond California
- Economic Development Board, Vallejo, California
- School Board, Oakland Unified School District
- Workforce Development Board, Santa Cruz, California

**Non-Profit:**

- Beyond Emancipation Board
- Code Nation

**Providing education and training on DEI matters to Boards of Trustees:** Our team has provided comprehensive DEI training and strategic guidance to the Board of Regents for both the California State University System and University of California Systems, focusing on critical initiatives including the Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander Student Achievement Program, Title IX Implementation Plan, CSU Juneteenth Symposium, Black Student Success Initiative, UC Black Administrators Conference, and UC Advisory on Policing.

**Municipal and Local Government Boards:** Our municipal board training includes strategic consultation with the City Council of Richmond, California, where we guided board members on implementing the Limited Assistance Safety Protocol, developing Comprehensive Strategic Work Plans, and advancing the Richmond Promise initiative while ensuring compliance with local and state statutory laws.

**Educational Governance Training:** We've delivered targeted DEI training to the School Board of Oakland Unified School District, focusing on Asset Management, Strategic Regional Analysis through an equity lens, and implementing Equity-Based Budgeting Systems. We've also provided strategic guidance to the Workforce Development Board in Santa Cruz, California, and the Beyond Emancipation Board.

Our board training approach emphasizes the practical application of DEI principles within fiduciary responsibilities, legal compliance requirements, and institutional governance structures, ensuring board members can effectively integrate equity considerations into strategic decision-making processes.

### **3. Conducting assessments of established DEI programs and producing reports of findings and recommendations.**

We conduct comprehensive DEI assessments across diverse institutional contexts, producing detailed analytical reports of findings and recommendations for strategic organizational transformation. Our assessment methodology combines qualitative stakeholder engagement to identify systemic gaps, salient coding, quantitative analysis, and actionable improvement opportunities/implementation plans.

**Higher Education System Assessments:** At California State University, Sacramento, our team conducted extensive assessments resulting in multiple strategic reports, including the Black Student Success Inventory and Report, Belonging Education and Anti-Bias Report, and the Ethnic Studies Listening Session Report. Our University of California, Berkeley assessment work produced the Chancellor's Task Force Report on becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution, the COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Management Equity Guide, the Independent Advisory Board Report on Police Accountability & Community Safety, and the comprehensive Undergraduate Diversity Report on Campus Experience.

**Municipal and Organizational Assessments:** Our assessment expertise extends to municipal contexts, including our work with the City of Richmond's City Manager's Office, where we developed the Limited Assistance Safety Protocol Guide based on a comprehensive community needs assessment and stakeholder engagement processes.

**Cross-Sector Assessment Methodology:** Our assessment approach systematically evaluates policy implementation, resource allocation, and outcome measurement across diverse organizational contexts. We conduct multi-departmental audits that assess documentation, procedures, and previous DEI initiatives while evaluating stakeholder engagement levels. Our comprehensive reports provide both institution-specific and system-wide recommendations, ensuring assessment findings translate into actionable strategic guidance that addresses governance, compliance, and operational effectiveness requirements.

### **4. Meeting with Boards of Trustees as part of the assessment and information-gathering process.**

We employ a comprehensive, multi-tiered approach when meeting with Boards of Trustees to conduct assessments and gather critical information for organizational transformation processes.

**Strategic Board Engagement Methodology:** Our board assessment process begins with a pre-survey of targeted questions that allows us to develop tailored general survey questions for all board members, followed by role-specific questions aligned to the organizational mission for each member during confidential one-on-one interviews. We conduct salient coding assessments to analyze the meaningfulness of responses, then overlay pattern coding to identify commonalities and perform gap analysis. Additionally, we host focused board retreats and focus groups to gather deeper insights about members' specific interests and the constituents they represent, cross-referencing all responses to develop comprehensive assessment reports.

This approach centers the board's strategic perspective and priorities while anchoring our findings in the lived experiences of those impacted by their governance.

**5. Meeting with executive leadership as part of the assessment and information-gathering process.**

We employ a comprehensive, multi-tiered approach when meeting with executive leadership and Cabinet-level leaders to conduct assessments and gather critical information for organizational transformation processes and operational excellence.

**Executive Leaders Engagement Methodology:** Our approach begins with a tailored pre-survey to capture baseline insights, informing the development of broader interview questions and job-embedded questions specific to each executive leader's role in advancing the mission and priorities of the Board. We apply salient coding to analyze the depth and meaning of their responses, followed by pattern coding to identify common themes and conduct gap analysis between stated goals and current practices.

We complement survey data with focus groups and interviews, offering executive leaders space to express their unique challenges and priorities. These discussions help us understand how executive leaders implement Board policies and hold themselves accountable to the direction of the Board and broader community. All responses are cross-referenced to build comprehensive assessment reports that inform actionable recommendations.

**6. Preparing an action plan aligned to organizational core values and assessment findings.**

We translate assessment findings into comprehensive, values-aligned action plans that drive sustainable organizational transformation. We specialize in developing strategic frameworks

integrating DEI practices with institutional missions while ensuring legal compliance and operational feasibility across diverse organizational contexts.

Our action planning methodology ensures strategic recommendations align with organizational core values while addressing assessment findings through specific timelines, accountability measures, and resource requirements. We establish measurement frameworks that connect DEI initiatives to organizational success outcomes and create accountability structures with clear success metrics and reporting protocols.

**Municipal and Regional Action Planning:** We facilitated and advised the City of Richmond on developing its equity-centered Comprehensive Strategic Priorities work plan for 2023-2028, ensuring alignment with community values and municipal governance requirements.

**Higher Education Strategic Planning:** Our higher education action planning includes preparing Sacramento State's comprehensive Antiracism and Inclusive Action Plan with 30 goals and 200 action steps. We developed an online tracking system that was community-facing and embedded transparency and accountability principles. At UC Berkeley, we created the Hispanic Serving Institution Implementation Plan and guided the strategic restructuring of the UC Berkeley Division of Equity & Inclusion.

**Organizational Transformation Planning:** For Code Nation, we developed a comprehensive DEI Strategic Plan including measurable goals, core value integration, and implementation roadmap, while introducing a DEI committee structure and onboarding process to sustain work post-engagement. Our UC Office of the President work involved co-developing action plans linked to UC's systemwide goals and state DEI mandates, ensuring comprehensive legal compliance, including Proposition 209, Senate Bill 54, ADA, and other legally required mandates.

## **7. Conducting DEI best practices research and providing analysis and reports.**

We have conducted DEI best practices research and provided analysis and reports. We bring a structured and evidence-based approach to conducting DEI best practices research and delivering actionable analysis to our clients. Drawing from our work with UC Berkeley, Sacramento State, the City of Richmond, and the Education Policy Fellows Program, we have developed a comprehensive assessment methodology that evaluates existing DEI frameworks while considering legal, operational, and reputational risks.

At the core of our approach is a Current State Analysis that evaluates DEI efforts across critical pillars within our client organization. CalPERS has five pillars: organizational culture, talent management, health equity, supplier diversity, and investments, which are the lenses through which we analyze DEI programming. This includes examining the employee lifecycle from outreach to succession planning practices, evaluating equity in service delivery and outcomes, and analyzing governance and policy integration through a DEI lens.

We incorporate benchmarking research that compares our clients' practices to those of leading public and private institutions, including other state agencies, corporations, and education systems with advanced equity models. Our risk assessment framework considers potential vulnerabilities across legal, political, reputational, and operational domains. We review court decisions, California-specific laws, and public sentiment to help our partners proactively manage controversy or policy shifts.

Each engagement culminates in a comprehensive assessment report with detailed findings, comparative gap analysis, benchmarking of peer organizations, and organization-specific recommendations designed to guide implementation, inform board-level decision-making, operational excellence, and ensure long-term alignment with DEI goals.

#### **8. Advising on best practices in procurement.**

We have advised corporations on best practices in procurement. We have provided comprehensive strategic guidance to support equitable procurement practices to the UC Office of the President - Procurement, coaching executive leaders as they developed and implemented the UC Strategic Sourcing California Gold Standard framework that serves as a model for large public institutions seeking to advance supplier diversity while maintaining competitive bidding and quality standards.

**Equitable Supplier Engagement Strategy Support:** We supported leadership in developing equitable supplier engagement strategies that contributed to UC's \$1.14 billion spent with diverse and small suppliers in FY2024 and helped establish UC's procurement dashboard tracking ~\$12 billion in annual spend. Our advisory work resulted in a 15% increase in the small and diverse supplier list at UC Davis while maintaining competitive bidding standards and contributed to \$363.7 million in procurement benefits, achieving 123% of UC's goal.

**Legal-Aligned DEI Integration Coaching:** Our procurement consultation services supported leaders in embedding DEI principles that helped UC achieve its goal of dedicating 25% of

addressable spend to partner with diverse and small suppliers. We coached executives in developing processes that enhanced supplier diversity tracking by implementing a new bi-annual data enrichment process. This ensured diversity initiatives enhanced procurement effectiveness while maintaining the processing of over 1 million purchase orders and 2.6 million invoices annually.

**Systemic Barrier Removal Facilitation:** Our advisory work resulted in the elimination of procedural barriers that previously limited diverse supplier participation. We supported process redesign initiatives that contributed to UC's successful launch of an automated Procurement Dashboard, providing a single source of truth on supplier diversity goals. Our consultation helped establish partnerships with key diversity organizations, including WBEC Pacific, which recognized UC Systemwide Procurement with the Agency of the Year Award in 2024.

## **9. Advising on best practices in hiring.**

We provide strategic advising on best practices in hiring. We provide comprehensive guidance on inclusive hiring practices across diverse organizational contexts, developing systematic approaches that reduce bias while increasing non-discriminatory practices and organizational effectiveness. Our consultative services focus on creating hiring frameworks that attract qualified and talented candidates from across the spectrum and support long-term retention, engagement, advancement, and succession planning throughout the complete employee lifecycle.

**Comprehensive Hiring Framework Development:** At Code Nation, we designed an inclusive hiring process featuring an extensive review of job descriptions, screening questions, and interview rubrics specifically designed to reduce bias throughout the outreach, marketing, recruitment, interview, and selection processes. We co-developed training for hiring managers on identifying institutional barriers and embracing inclusive evaluation methods, while creating a comprehensive hiring framework that integrated best practices from initial job posting through final selection.

**Large-Scale System Hiring Strategy:** Our work with UC Office of the President HR and UC Human Resources involved advising on system-wide hiring best practices that balanced local campus needs with consistent equity standards across the UC system. We provided guidance on redesigning recruitment and selection processes to reduce unconscious bias while maintaining organizational effectiveness, and advised on expanding candidate pipelines through strategic partnerships with diverse professional networks and educational institutions.

**Employee Lifecycle Integration:** At UC Berkeley and Sacramento State, we advised and developed the *Inclusive Search Process for Recruitment & Hiring*, providing comprehensive guidance on developing inclusive job descriptions, outreach strategies, search team development and training, hiring processes, onboarding, orientation, engagement, retention, promotion, succession planning and job-embedded professional development. We guided the development of training programs for hiring managers on unconscious bias, inclusive interviewing, and equitable candidate and finalist evaluation.

#### **10. Advising on best practices in healthcare delivery equity and accessibility.**

We have advised on best practices in healthcare delivery, equity, and accessibility. We provide strategic guidance on healthcare equity initiatives, utilizing a trauma-informed approach that eliminates disparities in patient care and health outcomes while ensuring cultural responsiveness and compliance with accessibility standards. Our advisory work spans academic medical centers, specialized healthcare institutions, and healthcare education programs.

**Academic Medical Center Equity Initiatives:** We provided high-level leadership and change management guidance for health system leaders at UC Office of the President Medical Centers (UCLA & UCI), focusing on patient access, cultural responsiveness, and compliance with equity standards. Our advisory work impacted healthcare equity initiatives across UC medical centers, specifically targeting the elimination of disparities in patient care, throughput, and health outcomes.

**Specialized Healthcare Institution Advisory:** At Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, we supported curriculum development addressing racial health disparities, inclusive clinical practice, and DEI integration into naturopathic training programs. Our guidance focused on authentic, culturally responsive approaches to serving diverse patient populations, developing inclusive patient care protocols that honored different cultural approaches to health and wellness.

**Healthcare Operations and Crisis Support:** Our healthcare advisory experience includes providing strategic consultation to the Vice President of Nursing at University of California, Irvine Health during the opening of the new UCI Health Hospital, focusing on equity integration into new facility operations. Additionally, we provided strategic consultation to the Crisis Assistance & Resources Education Support unit at Sacramento State and UC Berkeley for mental and emotional health support, ensuring crisis intervention services addressed all student population needs with culturally appropriate approaches.

**11. Advising on the inclusion of diversity best practices in the investment industry.**

We have partnered with talented and knowledgeable individuals on the inclusion of diversity best practices in the investment industry. We provide strategic guidance on integrating diversity best practices into investment operations while maintaining fiduciary responsibilities and regulatory compliance. Drawing from our extensive experience with large corporations, public institutions, and governmental agencies, we advise investment organizations on developing comprehensive approaches that advance equity goals within the constraints of fiduciary responsibilities and constitutional requirements.

**Fiduciary-Compliant Diversity Integration:** Our approach to investment industry diversity best practices emphasizes strategies that enhance investment performance while advancing equity goals. We consult on developing investment policies that incorporate various factors through risk assessment, market opportunity identification, performance metrics, and stakeholder engagement approaches that align with fiduciary responsibilities and organizational goals.

**Investment Manager Diversity and Engagement:** We provide comprehensive guidance on developing investment manager programs that expand opportunity while maintaining competitive performance standards. Our advisory work includes creating systematic approaches for identifying, evaluating, and engaging qualified investment managers, developing capacity-building partnerships that strengthen the manager pipeline, and implementing performance measurement frameworks that track both performance outcomes and investment returns.

**Legal Compliance and Risk Management:** Drawing from our extensive experience with Proposition 209 compliance, ADA requirements, and public sector legal requirements, we advise investment organizations on developing strategies that operate within applicable constitutional, non-discriminatory, and regulatory frameworks. Our guidance includes creating approaches that advance bias-reduction and non-discrimination goals through removing institutional barriers, increasing access, process examination and redesign, equity-centered policy development, and expansion of opportunities while ensuring full compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements.

**12. Advising on DEI best practices for public sector organizations that are consistent with federal and state law, including Section 31 of Article I of the California Constitution (commonly known as "Proposition 209").**



We have advised public sector organizations across California on implementing DEI strategies that are consistent with federal and state laws, including Proposition 209. We have worked closely with entities such as the UC Office of the President, UC Berkeley, and Sacramento State, supporting executive leaders in advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, and justice (DEIBJ) within the legal frameworks that govern public institutions.

**Legal Compliance Framework Development:** Through our work with UC Office of the President - Procurement & HR, we ensured all recommendations complied with Proposition 209, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VII and Title IX regulations by using strategies focused on opportunity for all while respecting cultural differences and environmental, geographic, and social nuances. We have supported procurement and human resource leaders at UCOP with the design of inclusive hiring, contracting, and evaluation practices that comply with state restrictions while expanding access and participation across the institution.

**Campus-Level Implementation Guidance:** At both UC Berkeley and Sacramento State, we advised senior executive leadership, cabinet members, and department heads on embedding best practices in access, belonging, and opportunity into their strategic plans, student success initiatives, and employee engagement efforts. Our work has addressed access and achievement, policy development, and compliance with relevant mandates, including Proposition 209, the ADA, and systemwide executive orders related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Comprehensive Compliance and Implementation Strategy:** We have supported best practices in policy design and program implementation for institutions seeking to serve undocumented students, improve campus climate, and uphold protections for politically targeted communities. Our technical guidance has helped public organizations strengthen governance structures, improve transparency, and build internal capacity to deliver on their mission in complex legal and political environments.

Our legal compliance consultative approach ensures that public sector organizations can advance meaningful human-centered, culturally-grounded, and data-informed initiatives while operating within the complex regulatory environment governing California public institutions, creating sustainable strategies that withstand legal scrutiny while achieving transformative outcomes.

### **13. Developing communication strategies highlighting the importance of DEI.**

We develop comprehensive communication strategies that effectively articulate the value and importance of DEI initiatives across organizational contexts. We co-create messaging frameworks that connect equity goals to organizational missions while engaging multiple stakeholder groups.

**Organizational Mission-Aligned Communication:** At Code Nation, we developed internal and external communication frameworks that articulated the value of DEI in tech education and hiring practices, creating a comprehensive communication strategy that connected DEI initiatives to the organizational mission of diversifying the technology industry. Our messaging framework highlighted equity outcomes for students while building stakeholder support for DEI investments.

**System-Wide Strategic Communication:** Our work with the UC Office of the President involved creating messaging strategies for internal communications on equity-related changes across procurement and HR functions, supporting executive leaders with talking points to ensure clarity, compliance, and cultural alignment. We developed a system-wide communication strategy highlighting UC's commitment to diversity and inclusion while focusing on academic excellence.

**Crisis and Community-Focused Communication:** We developed specialized communication strategies for crisis management and community engagement across multiple institutions. At Sacramento State, we created communication strategies for the Believing, Becoming, and Being framework for scaling diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging and justice (DEIBJ) efforts and managing messaging around DEIBJ progress and impact. This included briefings to chief executives, developing talking points for leaders, building capacity for message discipline in on-air interviews, and consistent campus messages addressing antisemitism, islamophobia, xenophobia, police shootings, and anti-Blackness.

**Impact-Driven and Outcome-Focused Messaging:** Our communication strategies consistently addressed misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation. We developed communication highlighting the connection between constitutional rights and effective crisis intervention for disenfranchised families and communities. For Teach for America, we developed a communication strategy connecting non-discriminatory efforts to teacher effectiveness and student achievement outcomes, creating messaging frameworks that built understanding among corps members about the importance of cultural intelligence and inclusive teaching practices.



## DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

CalPERS Board of Administration requires contract participation from certified Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs) in its contract process, unless specifically exempted. Only State of California, Office of Small Business and DVBE Services (OSDS) may certify a DVBE. The DVBE must perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation to be considered compliant with the DVBE program requirements. In order to obtain DVBE incentive participation credit, the contractor must be a certified DVBE **or** subcontract with a DVBE, certified by OSDS, **no later than** the Final Filing Date as specified in the Schedule of Events.

**Please read the following requirements carefully. Completion of this document is required regardless of intent to pursue DVBE incentive participation.**

### I. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this DVBE incentive participation, the following definitions apply:

- A. **Disabled veteran** means a veteran of the military, naval, or air services of the United States with a **service-connected disability of ten percent or more**, who is a resident of the State of California.
- B. **DVBE** means a business concern certified by OSDS as meeting all of the following:
  - 1. A sole proprietorship at least 51 percent owned by one or more disabled veterans; or in the case of a publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of its stock is owned by one or more disabled veterans; a subsidiary which is wholly owned by a parent corporation, but only if at least 51 percent of the voting stock of the parent corporation is owned by one or more disabled veterans; or a joint venture in which at least 51 percent of the joint venture's management and control and earnings are held by one or more disabled veterans.
  - 2. The management and control of the daily business operations are by one or more disabled veterans. The disabled veterans who exercise management and control are not required to be the same disabled veterans as the owners of the business concern.
  - 3. It is a sole proprietorship, corporation, or partnership with its home office located in the United States, which is not a branch or subsidiary of a foreign corporation, foreign firm, or other foreign based business.

**Note:** View certification information at <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/PD/About/Page-Content/PD-Branch-Intro-Accordion-List/OSDS/OSDS> or contact the OSDS at (916) 375-4940.

- C. *Commercially Useful Function*** A DVBE contractor, subcontractors, or supplier is considered performing a commercially useful function when it meets all of the following criteria:
1. The business concern is:
    - (a) Responsible for the execution of a distinct element of the work of the contract;
    - (b) Carries out its obligation by actually performing, managing, or supervising the work involved;
    - (c) Performs work that is normal for its business, services and function; and
  2. The business concern is not further subcontracting a greater portion of the work that is greater than would be expected by normal industry practices.

A contractor, subcontractor, or supplier will not be considered to perform a commercially useful function if the contractor's, subcontractor's, or supplier's role is limited to that of an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of small business, microbusiness, or DVBE participation. When subcontracting to small, micro, or DVBE subcontractors, the intent is for the subcontractor to provide goods or services required for the performance of the contract rather than artificial or incidental participation that provides an "appearance" of participation to meet the socio-economic objectives of these programs.

## **II. DVBE PARTICIPATION OPTIONS AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be **responsive** to the incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation and select one of the following options:

- A. **Option A – DVBE Incentive.** A bidder may submit DVBE participation percentages to receive and qualify for the incentive program. Bids that fail to submit the required form and confirm the level of DVBE participation will not be eligible to receive the DVBE incentive. **Refer to RFP, Section V Proposal Requirements, A(8) Technical Proposal/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation and Incentive.**
- B. **Option B- No DVBE Incentive Participation.** A bidder may opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

### **USE/SUBSTITUTION OF PROPOSED DVBE**

If awarded the contract, the successful bidder must use the DVBE subcontractor and/or supplier proposed in their final bid/proposal unless the contractor requests substitution via prior written notice to CalPERS and CalPERS approves such substitution. At a minimum, the request must include:

- A. A written explanation for the substitution;
- B. The identity of the person or firm substituted;
- C. Any change in the work or dollar/percentage amount caused by the substitution; and
- D. A revised DVBE Contract Participation (Attachment G, Exhibit 1) and applicable certification(s).

The request and CalPERS approval or disapproval of the substitution shall not affect compliance with any other provision of law, or any other contract requirements relating to substitution of subcontractors.

### **III. QUESTIONS**

The information below is provided to answer commonly asked questions and clarify potential misconceptions of the contract participation goal requirement. If further clarification is necessary, you may contact CalPERS Contracts Officer at (916) 795-3020 or [oscd\\_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov](mailto:oscd_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov) for assistance.

#### **Meeting the Goal**

- 1. Proposing incentive goal attainment is a commitment to use disabled veteran business enterprises for the established percent of the contract amount. If awarded a contract, CalPERS expects the DVBE subcontractors or suppliers to be utilized as identified in your proposal, unless a substitution is approved by CalPERS.
- 2. An expression of intent to subcontract with unidentified DVBE firms at some future date is insufficient to comply with DVBE incentive participation. Commitments must be finalized upon submission of your contract participation documentation to CalPERS.
- 3. **Out-of-state firms** are not excluded from participating in the DVBE incentive program. To do business with CalPERS, completion of this document is required for all bidders.



### DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

In order to be responsive to incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation. Check the appropriate box to indicate the option with which you choose to comply. Please read all instructions carefully prior to completing this form. **Only California certified DVBEs who perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation may be used to satisfy the DVBE program requirements.**

This solicitation does **not** have a DVBE participation requirement; however, you may still commit to an incentive percentage to obtain preference points.

- ☐ **Option A** - I commit to the percent listed below to qualify for the DVBE incentive program.
- ☐ 1% - 1.99%
- ☐ 2% - 2.99%
- ☐ 3% - 3.99%
- ☐ 4% - 4.99%
- ☐ 5% or Over
- ☒ **Option B** – I opt out of participating in the DVBE incentive program.

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In order to meet the DVBE participation requirement, list one or more DVBE vendors and the work to be performed.

DVBE Company Name:

E-mail (if available):

DVBE Certification Number:

Telephone Number: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Contact Name:

Fax Number: (XXX) XXX-XXXX

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:

Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:

☐ SB ☐ MB

Work performed or goods provided for this contract:

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

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**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

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- ☐ I commit to utilizing one or more of the DVBEs listed above in order to meet the total claimed DVBE% indicated, and certify that the DVBE vendor(s) listed above have been notified and agree to provide services for this contract.

Total DVBE % \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- ☒ I opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

Ta Lynn Mitchell

06-28-2025

MADRID

06-29-2025

Date



### List of Proposed Subcontractors

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this attachment. Please check the applicable box. (A photo copy of this form is acceptable if additional sheets are required.)

- ☐ No subcontractors will be used.
- ☐ No subcontractors will be used other than the DVBE firms identified on Attachment G, Exhibit 1.
- ☒ The following subcontractors will be employed and will perform the work or services identified below.
- ☐ Non-small business preference to be applied by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.

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Company Name:

Contact Name: Dij Jayaratna

Telephone Number: 925-464-1429

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code: 1830 Springs Road #243, Vallejo CA 94591

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:

The Project Manager will support the operational and administrative needs of TKM Consulting and Set-Up-For Success.

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:13.82%

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Company Name:

Contact Name: Dr. Kawami Evans

Telephone Number: 831-325-4136

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code: 1830 Springs Road #243, Vallejo CA 94591

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor: The Data Analysis Consultant will provide comprehensive data collection, analysis, and reporting capabilities to support evidence-based DEI assessment and recommendations.

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:6.45%

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California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment H

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Company Name:

Contact Name: Janine Lindsey

Telephone Number: 510-506-8182

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code: 1830 Springs Road #243, Vallejo CA 94591

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor: The Legal Consultant will provide specialized expertise on compliance with federal and state laws governing DEI practices in public sector organizations

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:6.45%

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Company Name:

Contact Name: Bill Thomason

Telephone Number: 415-725-7590

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code: 1830 Springs Road #243, Vallejo CA 94591

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor: The Pension Investment Consultant will provide specialized expertise on integrating diversity best practices into investment operations while maintaining fiduciary responsibilities

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:6.45%

- 1 If your firm is claiming the non-small business preference by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.



**Required Attachments Certification Checklist**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420**

Firm's Name: TKM Consulting and Set-Up-For Success

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this Attachment. Complete the "Proposer Certification" column and submit this checklist to confirm the items submitted with your Proposal. CalPERS staff will use the shaded "CalPERS Verification" column to confirm receipt of all required documents.

| Attachment Name/Description                                                                                                                                                             | Proposer Certification                                                 | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted Cover Letter signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                                                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| a. A statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer good for 180 calendar days.                                                                              |                                                                        |                                                             |
| b. A statement expressing the Proposer's willingness to perform the services as described in this RFP.                                                                                  |                                                                        |                                                             |
| c. A statement expressing the Proposer's availability of staff and other required resources for performing all services and providing all deliverables as described in the RFP.         |                                                                        |                                                             |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment of Proposal packages as specified in the RFP.                                                                                                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF marked " <b>Master Copy</b> " containing original signatures.                                                                                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment marked " <b>Reproduction Copy.</b> " All pages containing proprietary information should be removed and a cover sheet must be included which provides: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1. the firm's names;                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                        |                                                             |
| 2. total number of pages; and                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                        |                                                             |
| 3. identification of all pages removed due to proprietary information.                                                                                                                  |                                                                        |                                                             |
| <b>Note: Entire proposal may not be marked confidential and proprietary.</b>                                                                                                            |                                                                        |                                                             |
| Submitted Minimum Qualifications Certification (Attachment A) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Proposal/Proposer Certification Sheet (Attachment B) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Small Business certified? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                           |                                                                        |                                                             |
| DVBE certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                                     |                                                                        |                                                             |
| Micro Business certified? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                           |                                                                        |                                                             |

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment I

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                        |                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration (Attachment C) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contracting Act Declarations (Attachment D) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contract-Related Disclosure Form (Attachment E) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Proposal Questionnaire (Attachment F)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation (Attachment G, including Exhibit 1)</p> <p>Option A - Meets DVBE Participation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No<br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option B - DVBE Incentive Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No<br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option C – Elected no DVBE participation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Option D – California Certified Micro Business? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>List of Proposed Subcontractors (Attachment H) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Required Attachments Certification Checklist (Attachment I)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Joint Venture proposal?</p> <p>If yes, was documentation submitted describing the responsibilities of each party in the Joint Venture, Exhibit 1? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Preference Program request?</p> <p>Small Business Preference claimed? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Target Area Contract Preference Act claimed? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Is the Corporation registered and in good standing to do business? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Submit current copy of a Secretary of State Certification or Business License<br/>(Check the California Secretary of State website at <a href="https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business">https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business</a> to verify status)</p> <p>Is the company an LLP? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted the Fee Proposal (Attachment J) in a separate document in the Proposal package email. Fee Proposal clearly labeled as <b>"FEE PROPOSAL FOR RFP NO. 2024-9375, submitted by [YOUR COMPANY NAME]."</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

| Verifications Performed by CalPERS Staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Has Contractor been decertified by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing?<br>(Check the California Regulatory Notice Register at<br><a href="https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/">https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/</a> ) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of CalPERS Reviewer

## **a. Joint Venture Agreement**

### **Joint Venture Agreement (Draft) Between TKM Consulting and Set-Up for Success**

This Joint Venture Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into as of June 13, 2025, by and between:

TKM Consulting, a California-based small female-owned consulting firm led by Ta Lynn Mitchell, with a place of business at 1830 Springs Road # 243, Vallejo CA 94591 (hereafter "TKM"), and

Set-Up for Success, a California-based small female-owned organizational health consulting agency led by Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell, with a principal place of business at 418 Ladera Drive, Vallejo, California 94591 (hereafter "SFS").

Together referred to as "Joint Venture Partners."

**1. Purpose:** The purpose of this Agreement is to establish a joint venture between TKM and SFS to pursue and, if awarded, fulfill the requirements of CalPERS RFP No. 2024-9420 for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services.

**2. Structure and Name:** The venture will operate as a contractual partnership under the name: TKM & Set-Up for Success Collaborative (hereafter "TKM & SFS")

**3. Duration:** This Agreement shall remain in effect for the full duration of any contract awarded through the CalPERS RFP, including extensions or amendments, unless terminated per Section 10.

**4. Revenue Sharing:** The Parties agree to the following revenue distribution based on scope of work: TKM Consulting, Lead Consultant: 53.5% and Set-Up for Success: 46.5% Joint Venture Partner Consultant

### **5. Roles and Responsibilities:**

Lead Partner: TKM Consulting (Ta Lynn Mitchell)

- Serves as Lead Consultant and Project Manager
- Oversees project timeline, deliverables, and CalPERS communications
- Leads client engagement, research, benchmarking, reporting, and quality assurance

Joint Venture Partner: Set-Up for Success (Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell)

- Strategic partner and DEI expertise contributing to organizational health assessment, capacity building, and stakeholder engagements
- Provides board-level expertise, instrument & evaluation design, and compliance review.

**Shared Responsibilities:**

- Jointly develop leadership interviews, program review & assessments, action and implementation plans, facilitate focus groups, co-author reports, and co-deliver professional development and recommendations.
- Collaborate on presentations to the CalPERS Board and stakeholder groups

**6. Intellectual Property:** All work products, tools, and deliverables produced will be jointly owned, except for the Set-Up for Success proprietary organizational health assessment tool and conceptual design unless otherwise agreed in writing.

**7. Liability:** The Parties agree to joint liability for all contractual responsibilities and performance standards.

**8. Decision-Making:** TKM will lead daily project management of the client relationship. Strategic matters and substantive content decisions will be jointly reviewed, agreed upon and approved.

**9. Termination** This Agreement may be terminated by either Party with 30 days' written notice. All outstanding work will be completed or transitioned responsibly.

**b. Division of Labor**

**TKM Consulting (Lead Partner) Responsibilities:**

- **Project Leadership & Client Management:** Serve as primary CalPERS contact and client relationship manager, leading all client communications and strategic coordination.
- **Research & Assessment:** Lead research, benchmarking analysis, and evidence-based research methodology
- **Implementation Support:** Phase IV hands-on guidance, capacity building, and sustainable transformation delivery
- **Talent Management & Culture:** Employee engagement strategies, recruitment and retention best practices, and organizational culture development
- **Investment Industry Expertise:** Best practices for investment management, ESG integration, and fiduciary-compliant equity strategies
- **Supplier Diversity:** Procurement best practices, barrier removal, and economic opportunity advancement
- **Project Administration:** Timeline management, deliverable coordination, quality assurance, and operational discipline

**Set-Up for Success (Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell) Joint Venture Partner Responsibilities:**

- **Board & Leadership Training & Engagement:** DEI education and risk reduction strategies for Board of Trustees, leveraging extensive board governance experience across corporate, private, non-profit and municipal entities.
- **Phase I Leadership:** Lead board and executive interviews, stakeholder engagement strategy, and comprehensive information-gathering processes.
- **Legal & Compliance Oversight:** Proposition 209 compliance, state mandates including Senate Bill 54 and SB 826, and ADA regulatory framework analysis.
- **Assessment & Research:** Lead comprehensive DEI program evaluation and organizational health assessment, data-gathering and analysis.
- **Implementation & Action Plans:** Lead the co-curation of action plans and capacity development of stakeholders, and execute a human-centered, data-informed, and culturally-grounded strategy development.
- **Scaling Insights:** Leverage public, private, corporate and municipal expertise for large-scale organizational transformation and regulatory and statutory compliance,
- **Report & Presentation Development:** Lead author on assessment findings, strategic recommendations, and comprehensive evaluation reports

**Shared Responsibilities:**

- **Strategic Planning:** Joint development of action plans, implementation roadmaps, guides, and sustainable transformation frameworks
- **Board Presentations:** Collaborative presentation delivery to CalPERS Board in open sessions, ensuring comprehensive coverage of findings and recommendations
- **Health Equity Initiatives:** Combined expertise on healthcare delivery equity, social determinants of health, and member outcome improvement
- **Knowledge Transfer:** Joint capacity building, training development, and internal capability enhancement
- **Quality Review:** Cross-review of all deliverables, recommendations, and final quality assurance processes

**c. Qualifications and Characteristics of Each Partner**

**TKM Consulting - Lead Partner**

**Core Qualifications:**

- **DEI Implementation in Regulated Systems:** Extensive experience navigating complex organizational change in highly regulated environments, particularly within California's constitutional and legal framework
- **Public Sector Expertise:** Deep experience with UC system, government agencies, educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations serving diverse communities



- **Legal Compliance Advisory:** Proven track record with Proposition 209, Senate Bill 54, SB 826, and state DEI mandates while maintaining organizational equity goals
- **Hands-on Transformation Delivery:** Strong project management capabilities with crisis-tested implementation support and sustainable change management
- **Community-Centered Approach:** Trusted by institutions to lead sensitive change work while maintaining authentic community engagement and stakeholder trust
- **Executive Coaching:** Expertise in leadership development, administrative excellence, people & performance management, budget development, and transformative impact measurement.
- **Assessment and Evaluation:** Proven methodology for comprehensive DEI program evaluation, benchmarking analysis, framework development, and strategic recommendations
- **Strategic & Action Planning:** Deep corporate and municipal system experience with large-scale institutional transformation and regulatory and statutory compliance.
- **Multi-Sector Expertise:** Proven success across corporate, educational, municipal governmental, private and nonprofit contexts.

#### Key Characteristics:

- **Crisis & Political Management:** Successfully navigated sensitive organizational challenges during periods of political and social upheaval
- **Strategic Planning & Change Management**
- **Strategic DEI Framework Development**
- **Implementation & Action Planning**
- **Collaborative Project Design:** Partnership-oriented approach with proven stakeholder engagement expertise and inclusive facilitation methods
- **Equity-First Framework:** Grounded in community engagement principles with deep understanding of systemic barriers and institutional change
- **Operational Excellence:** Strong communication discipline, timeline management, and quality assurance capabilities that ensure project success

#### Set-Up for Success (Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell) - Joint Venture Partner

#### Core Qualifications:

- **Doctoral Expertise:** Advanced education in equity-centered organizational development, research excellence and evidence-based methodology and analysis.
- **Board Governance Experience:** Extensive training and consultation in governance with Boards of Trustees across corporate, educational, municipal, governmental, private and nonprofit sectors.
- **Executive Coaching:** Expertise in leadership development, administrative excellence, people & performance management, budget development, and transformative impact measurement.

- **DEI Implementation in Regulated Systems:** Extensive experience navigating complex organizational change in highly regulated environments, particularly within California's constitutional and legal framework
- **Public Sector Expertise:** Deep experience with UC system, government agencies, educational institutions, and nonprofit organizations serving diverse communities
- **Assessment and Evaluation:** Proven methodology for comprehensive DEI program evaluation, benchmarking analysis, framework development, and strategic recommendations
- **Strategic & Action Planning:** Deep corporate and municipal system experience with large-scale institutional transformation and regulatory and statutory compliance.
- **Crisis & Political Management:** Specialization in crisis and political management, risk-intelligence, navigation of sensitive organizational challenges during periods of political and social unrest.
- **Strategic Communications:** Purposeful use of communication to achieve specific organizational priorities and goals.

#### Key Characteristics:

- **Board-Level Strategist:** Specialized experience in Board and Trustee engagement, education, governance integration, risk-mitigation, interest-based negotiation and constituent development.
- **Evidence-Based Analysis:** Organizational redesign combined with practical implementation planning ensuring recommendations are both theoretically sound and operationally feasible
- **Multi-Sector Expertise:** Proven success across corporate, educational, municipal governmental, private and nonprofit contexts.
- **Strategic Planning & Change Management-** Setting and achieving organizational vision and mission, long-term planning, program analysis that results in transformative impact.
- **Strategic DEI Framework Development-** Creation of a comprehensive action plan that considers all stakeholder groups, elevates cultural intelligence, integrates policy and practice to ensure systematic equality in access, opportunity and belonging for all.
- **Implementation & Action Planning-** Co-curation of a detailed guide or roadmap to achieve organizational goals.
- **Collaborative Project Design:** Partnership-oriented approach with proven stakeholder engagement expertise and skillful facilitation methods

#### Combined Partnership Strengths

**Powerhouse Collaboration:** This joint venture offers CalPERS a comprehensive team with field-tested implementation capability (TKM) paired with research-informed strategy and board expertise (Set-Up for Success), creating a unique combination of practical experience and academic rigor.

**Complete Coverage:** Our combined expertise addresses all five CalPERS DEI pillars—Culture, Talent Management, Health Equity, Supplier Diversity, and Investments—through demonstrated experience and proven methodologies.

**Scalable and Sustainable Approach:** The partnership structure allows for flexible resource allocation based on project phase requirements while building internal CalPERS capacity for long-term sustainability.

**Proven Collaboration History:** Our established working relationship ensures seamless project delivery, shared accountability, and collaborative problem-solving throughout the engagement.

**Compliance-Aligned Expertise:** Together, we deliver compliance-aligned, community-responsive, and impact-driven DEI transformation that honors CalPERS' fiduciary responsibilities while advancing equity goals within California's regulatory framework.

**Signatures:**

TKM Consulting By: Ta Lynn Mitchell

Name: Ta Lynn Mitchell Title: Lead Consultant

Date: June 13, 2025

Set-Up for Success By: Mia Settles-Tidwell

Name: Dr. Mia Settles-Tidwell, Title: Joint Venture Partner Consultant

Date: June 13, 2025

Printed on: 6/26/2025 10:52:08 PM

To verify most current certification status go to: <https://www.caleprocure.ca.gov>

## Office of Small Business & DVBE Services

**Certification ID:** 2032564**Legal Business Name:**

TKM Consulting, LLC

**Doing Business As (DBA) Name 1:****Doing Business As (DBA) Name 2:****Address:**

1830 Springs Road #243

Vallejo

CA 94591

**Email Address:**

tallynn@tkmconsultingllc.com

**Business Web Page:****Business Phone Number:**

925/464-1429

**Business Fax Number:****Business Types:**

Service

| Certification Type | Status   | From       | To         |
|--------------------|----------|------------|------------|
| SB(Micro)          | Approved | 06/26/2025 | 06/30/2027 |

Stay informed! KEEP YOUR CERTIFICATION PROFILE UPDATED!

-LOG IN at [CaleProcure.CA.GOV](https://www.caleprocure.ca.gov)

Questions?

Email: [OSDSHELP@DGS.CA.GOV](mailto:OSDSHELP@DGS.CA.GOV)

Call OSDS Main Number: 916-375-4940

707 3rd Street, 1-400, West Sacramento, CA 95605

**TARGET AREA CONTRACT PREFERENCE ACT  
PREFERENCE REQUEST FOR GOODS AND SERVICES SOLICITATIONS***Complete this form to request TACPA preferences for this bid.*

SOLICITATION NUMBER

2024-9420

AGENCY/DEPT

CalPERS

Target Area Contract Preference Act (TACPA) preferences are available only if the lowest responsible bid and resulting contract exceeds \$100,000. Your firm must be California based. You must certify, under penalty of perjury, to perform either **50%** of the labor hours required to complete a contract for GOODS, or **90%** of the labor hours required to complete a contract for SERVICES in the Target Area Contract Preference Act zone(s) you identify in Section I. The TACPA provides bid selection preferences of 5% for eligible worksites (Section I), and 1% to 4% for hiring eligible workforce employees (Section II). To identify Census Tract and Block Group numbers contact the city or county Planning and Development Commission for the intended worksite or visit the U.S. Census Bureau website ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)).

**Section I. 5% WORKSITE(S) PREFERENCE ELIGIBILITY AND LABOR HOURS****To the Bidder: Preference may be denied for failure to provide the following required information:**

- (1) Identify each firm in the supply chain, including yours, that will perform any of the contract labor hours required to complete this contract. Identify your role in the distribution process. Transportation hours performed by each carrier must be reported separately.
- (2) List complete addresses for each firm named below.
- (3) Report projected number of labor hours required to perform the contract for each firm.
- (4) Enter the CENSUS TRACT number.
- (5) Enter the BLOCK GROUP number.
- (6) Identify the California designated TACPA worksite(s) by entering the proper **Criteria** letter A, B, C, D, E, F (see reverse for instructions) in the Criteria column.

| (1)<br>FIRM NAME and CONTRACT FUNCTION:<br>(Manufacturing, transportation, shipping, warehousing, admin., etc.)<br>Use additional pages, as needed, to fully report worksite information. | (2)<br>WORKSITE ADDRESS<br>Street Address, City, County, State, Zip Code, Phone Number | (3)<br>PROJECTED<br>LABOR HOURS | COMPLETE FOR ALL SITES LOCATED WITHIN A TACPA<br>PREFERENCE AREA(S) |                     |                         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                        |                                 | (4)<br>TRACT NUMBER                                                 | (5)<br>BLOCK NUMBER | (6)<br>CRITERIA (A – F) |
| TKM Consulting                                                                                                                                                                            | 368 San Marino ave., Vallejo, Ca 94589                                                 | 100                             | 251400                                                              | 1                   | D                       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                        |                                 |                                                                     |                     |                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                        |                                 |                                                                     |                     |                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                        |                                 |                                                                     |                     |                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                        |                                 |                                                                     |                     |                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                        |                                 |                                                                     |                     |                         |
| TOTAL PROJECTED LABOR HOURS:                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                        | 100.00                          |                                                                     |                     |                         |

**Section II. 1% TO 4% WORKFORCE PREFERENCE****Bidders must qualify their firm's work site eligibility to request an additional 1% to 4% workforce preference in Section II.**

- ☐ I request a 1% preference for hiring eligible persons to perform 5 to 9% of the total contract labor hours.
- ☐ I request a 2% preference for hiring eligible persons to perform 10 to 14% of the total contract labor hours.
- ☐ I request a 3% preference for hiring eligible persons to perform 15 to 19% of the total contract labor hours.
- ☐ I request a 4% preference for hiring eligible persons to perform 20% or more of the total contract labor hours.

**Section III. CERTIFICATION FOR WORKSITE AND WORKFORCE PREFERENCES****To receive TACPA preferences, the following certification must be completed and signed by the Bidder.**

I hereby certify under penalty of perjury that the bidder (1) is a California based company as defined in the TACPA regulations; (2) shall ensure that at least 50% of the labor hours required to complete a contract for Goods, or 90% of the labor hours to complete a Services contract shall be performed at the designated TACPA worksite(s) claimed in Section I; (3) shall hire persons who are TACPA eligible employees to perform the specified percent of total contract labor hours as claimed in Section II; (4) has provided accurate information on this request. I understand that any person furnishing false certification, willfully providing false information or omitting information, or failing to comply with the TACPA requirements is subject to sanctions as set forth in the statutes.

|                                           |                                        |                              |                                              |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| BIDDER'S NAME & TITLE<br>Ta Lynn Mitchell | BIDDER'S SIGNATURE<br>Ta Lynn Mitchell | PHONE NUMBER<br>925-464-1829 | EMAIL ADDRESS<br>talynn@tkmconsultingllc.com |
|                                           |                                        | FAX NUMBER                   | DATE<br>06-28-2025                           |



# Secretary of State

## Certificate of Status

I, SHIRLEY N. WEBER, PH.D., California Secretary of State, hereby certify:

**Entity Name:** TKM Consulting LLC  
**Entity No.:** 202252215583  
**Registration Date:** 08/30/2022  
**Entity Type:** Limited Liability Company - CA  
**Formed In:** CALIFORNIA  
**Status:** Active

The above referenced entity is active on the Secretary of State's records and is authorized to exercise all its powers, rights and privileges in California.

This certificate relates to the status of the entity on the Secretary of State's records as of the date of this certificate and does not reflect documents that are pending review or other events that may impact status.

No information is available from this office regarding the financial condition, status of licenses, if any, business activities or practices of the entity.



**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I execute this certificate and affix the Great Seal of the State of California this day of June 28, 2025.

**SHIRLEY N. WEBER, PH.D.**  
**Secretary of State**

**Certificate No.:** 342629835

To verify the issuance of this Certificate, use the Certificate No. above with the Secretary of State Certification Verification Search available at [bizfileOnline.sos.ca.gov](http://bizfileOnline.sos.ca.gov).



June 30, 2025

Contracts Officer  
California Public Employees' Retirement  
System Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

To whom it may concern:

As co-Founders of the diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging and culture consulting firm, Willing Observers LLC, we write to submit our response to Proposal No. 2024-9420. We both intend to co-lead on this project. We have the authority to submit this proposal and to bind Willing Observers LLC contractually. We are both fully willing and excited to perform the services described in this RFP. We confirm that Willing Observers has the available staff and required resources for performing all services and providing all deliverables as described in this RFP. Dr. Arciniega will provide all signatures, on behalf of both of us, for the remaining contents of this proposal. This proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer good for 180 days.

Moreover, Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko understand the laws and regulations governing public, private, non-profit, and governmental diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives. Both Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko, as experts, have helped professional organizations navigate the new and constantly-changing political terrain. Dr. Maceyko, as expert in policy and faculty in constitutional law, in particular, currently is working with an association of dozens of organizations to ensure that each organization has custom culture initiatives that are in compliance with their respective state and federal laws and, at the same time, can update their frameworks to continue expanding and deepening inclusion and belonging strategies for all. Willing Observers works with attorneys who are experts in employment law, discrimination, and social justice, as needed.

The file has all pages containing proprietary information removed.

- Proprietary information belongs to the firm Willing Observers LLC.
- Total number of pages in this document is: 39
- Pages removed due to proprietary information are:
  - Attachment A : Exhibit 1 - Page 1 - 4
  - Attachment F : 5-9; 11-19



*Luzilda Arciniega*  
Lucy

Dr. Luzilda Arciniega, Co-Founder



*Melissa Maceyko*  
Missy

Dr. Melissa Maceyko, Co-Founder

**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Minimum Qualifications Certification**

As prescribed in the Minimum Qualifications, Section IV, of the Request for Proposal (RFP), all Proposers are required to sign and return this Attachment, along with written evidence of how each qualification is met on Attachment A, Exhibit 1, Evidence of Minimum Qualifications. The undersigned hereby certifies that the firm submitting this response fulfills the minimum qualifications outlined below, as well as the requirements contained in the RFP.

**Minimum Qualifications include:**

- A. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer's organization must have been in operation for at least one (1) year.

The organization, Willing Observers LLC, was founded in the fall of 2021. The Articles of Organization have a file date of 12/07/2021. Certificate Verification Number: S813MA

- B. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience with progressively increased scope, responsibility, and organized complexity in the field of DEI consulting that includes a combination of assessing, advising, strategic planning, training, and developing best-practice DEI programs.

Both founders of the organization and co-leads of this proposed project have each had over ten years of experience in diversity, equity, inclusion consulting before founding the company. They have progressively enhanced their expertise, beginning with training, using their background as qualitative and quantitative researchers and in DEI best practices, to create assessments and conduct audits to assess DEI and organizational culture, create strategic plans, and develop best-practice DEI programs.

- C. As of the RFP release date, the Proposer must have a minimum of three (3) years of experience providing consultation services in the DEI field to public, non-profit, or private sector organizations related to their culture, talent management, and internal and external-facing business practices. Experience advising within the fields of investments and healthcare delivery are highly desired, as is current or past public sector experience.

Each of the co-founders and co-leads on the project have at least ten years individually in the field of DEI providing consulting services to for-profit, non-profit, and higher-education organizations. Since the organization was founded almost four years ago, the co-founders have also provided consultation services to non-profit, private sector, and higher-education organizations to help create a culture of belonging, improve their talent management processes to be more fair, and they have helped companies manage their internal and external-facing



## PROPOSAL/PROPOSER CERTIFICATION SHEET

### 1. Designation of Official Contact Person

The individual to whom all information and correspondence regarding this RFP should be transmitted is:

Firm Name: Willing Observers

Contact Name and Title: Luzilda Arciniega, Co-Founder

Address: 4712 E 2nd. St #744 Long Beach CA 90803

Phone Number: 858-744-1130

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: lucy@willingobservers.com

### 2. Indicate your organization type:

☒ Limited Liability Company

☒ Partnership

☐ Joint Venture (If checked, attach required documentation. See "Exhibit 1")

☐ Limited Liability Corporation

☐ Corporation (Corporation Number \_\_\_\_\_)

☐ Sole Proprietorship

### 3. Federal Employer ID No. (FEIN): 87-3870538

### 4. California Corporation Number: 202134310167

### 5. Are you certified with the Department of General Services, Office of Small Business and DVBE Certification as:

a. California Small Business Yes ☒ No ☐

b. Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Yes ☐ No ☒

c. California Micro Business Yes ☒ No ☐

**NOTE:** A copy of your Certification is required to be included if either of the above items is checked "Yes"

### 6. Statement of Compliance

Proposer has, unless exempted, complied with the State of California's requirements pertaining to the development, implementation, and maintenance of the nondiscrimination program. (California Government Code section 12990 (a-f) and Title 2, California Code of Regulations, section 8103, et. seq.)

**7. Does your Proposal contain Proprietary Information?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ (If yes, attach a separate sheet to this certification which specifically itemizes the section(s) marked as "proprietary information". See "Submission of Proposals".)

**8. Reproduction Copy**

The total number of pages contained in the "Copy for Reproduction": 39 (See "Submission of Proposals".)

**9. Contract Execution Information**

If awarded a contract, the individual to whom the contract should be transmitted is:

Contact Name and Title: Luzilda Arciniega, Co-Founder

Address: 4712 E 2nd St #744 Long Beach CA 90803

Phone Number: 858-744-1130

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: [lucy@willingobservers.com](mailto:lucy@willingobservers.com)

The name of the company officer authorized to sign this contract is:

Name and Title: Luzilda Arciniega, Co-Founder

Address: 4712 E 2nd St #744 Long Beach CA 90803

Phone Number: 858-744-1130

Fax Number: N/A

E-Mail Address: [lucy@willingobservers.com](mailto:lucy@willingobservers.com)

---

**The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an individual authorized to bind the firm contractually and said signature authorizes verification of this information.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

6/17/2025  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Luzilda Arciniega, Co-Founder  
\_\_\_\_\_

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment B

Page 3 of 3

Name and Title (Please Print)



## **Addendum to Attachment B**

### **7) Does your Proposal contain Proprietary Information?**

Yes No (If yes, attach a separate sheet to this certification which specifically itemizes the section(s) marked as “proprietary information”. See “Submission of Proposals”.)

Sections marked as proprietary information include:

- Attachment A: Exhibit 1: Pages 1-4 (overall page count: 4-7)
- Attachment F: Pages 5-9; 11-19 (overall page count: 23-27; 29-37)



**California Public Employees' Retirement System**

**California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration**

Firm's Name Willing Observers LLC

The firm named above certifies, that the firm is eligible to contract with the State of California and CalPERS, pursuant to the provisions of the California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act of 2003 (Public Contract Code section 10286 et. seq.).

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Luzilda", written over a horizontal line.

Authorized Signature

6/17/2025

Date

Luzilda Arciniega, Co-Founder

Name and Title (Please Print)



## **California Public Employees' Retirement System**

### **Contracting Act Declarations**

CalPERS is prohibited from contracting with individuals or firms who do business subject to the following statutes. By signing this form, you are certifying that you or your firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, a state agency.

#### **Sudan Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477, a bidder or proposer who is a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm does not currently have, and has not had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, and in accordance with Public Contract Code section 10478, this firm hereby certifies it is not a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).
- ☐ This firm is a "scrutinized company" (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476), but has received written permission from the Department of General Services (DGS) to submit a bid or proposal pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10477(b). A copy of the written permission from DGS is included with the firm's bid or proposal.
- ☐ This firm currently has, or has had within the previous three years, business activities or other operations outside of the United States, but hereby certifies that is not a "scrutinized company" due to specific activities in Sudan (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10476).

#### **Iran Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to the Iran Contracting Act of 2010 (Public Contract Code section 2201, et. seq.), if a bidder, at the time of the bid or proposal for a new contract, or renewal of an existing contract, has engaged<sup>1</sup> in investment activities in Iran (as described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5) is ineligible, and shall not, bid on, submit a proposal for, or enter into or renew a contract with a

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<sup>1</sup> Or such person is identified on a list created by the Department of General Services pursuant to Section 2203(b) as a person engaging in investment activities in Iran.

public entity for goods or services for one million dollars (\$1,000,000) or more. (Public Contract Code section 2203(a)).

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm, or person, hereby certifies that it (or he or she) is not identified on the DGS list created pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(b) as a firm or person engaging in "investment activities" in Iran described in Public Contract Code section 2202.5(a) or 2202.5(b).
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies it is permitted to submit a bid or proposal to a public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c) because its investment activities in Iran were (1) made before July 1, 2010, (2) were not expanded or renewed after July 1, 2010, and (3) the firm has adopted, publicized, and is implementing a formal plan to cease the investment activities in Iran and to refrain from engaging in any new investments in Iran.
- ☐ The firm hereby certifies that although it is a financial institution that extends twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) or more in credit to another person, for 45 days or more, the person who will use the credit to provide goods or services in the energy sector in Iran is a person permitted to submit a bid or proposal to the public agency pursuant to Public Contract Code section 2203(c). (See Public Contract Code section 2202.3(d)).

**Democratic Republic of the Congo Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 10490 and section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)), a scrutinized company (as defined in Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) is ineligible to, and shall not, bid on or submit a proposal for a contract with a state agency for goods or services related to products or services that are the reason the firm must comply with section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This is not a "scrutinized company" or does not currently use any conflict mineral products that are necessary to the functionality or production of a product manufactured by the firm from the Democratic Republic of the Congo or an "adjoining country" (see 15 U.S.C.A § 78(m)(p)), and section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (Pub.L. No.111-203, (July 21, 2010) 124 Stat. 1376)).
- ☐ This firm has ceased to be regarded as a "scrutinized company" (as defined by Cal. Public Contract Code section 10490(b)) because (1) it is not in violation of section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C.A. § 78(m)(p)); or (2) it has filed an amended or corrective filing under section 13(p) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, which filing corrected the violations; or (3) three years have passed since the date of the final judgment or settlement entered in a civil or administrative action brought by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

- ☐ Disclosure requirements have been temporarily waived by the SEC because the President of the United States has transmitted a determination that the waiver or revision is in the national security interest of the United States, or the disclosure requirements have been terminated because the President has determined and certified to the appropriate congressional committees that no armed groups continue to be directly involved and benefitting from this firm's commercial activity involving conflict minerals.

**Unruh Contracting Declaration:**

Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 2010, a bidder or proposer who proposes to enter into or renew a contract with a state agency with respect to any contract in the amount of \$100,000 or more must certify, under penalty of perjury, at the time the bid or proposal is submitted or the contract is renewed that they are in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act and the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, and that any policy that they have against any sovereign nation or peoples recognized by the government of the United States, including, but not limited to, the nation and people of Israel, is not used to discriminate in violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act or the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.

**This firm is not prohibited from submitting a bid or proposal for a contract with CalPERS, because (check the applicable box):**

- ☒ This firm certifies that it is in compliance with the Unruh Civil Rights Act, as defined in Public Contract Code Section 2010.

**I, the official named below, hereby declare that I am duly authorized to make these declarations on behalf of the above-named firm. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on the date listed below.**



Authorized Signature

Luzilda Arciniega, Co-Founder

Name and Title (Please Print)

06/17/25

Date

Willing Observers LLC

Firm Name (Please Print)





**CalPERS Contract-Related Disclosure Form**

*(To be used if Contractor is not required to file a  
Placement Agent Information Disclosure Form (2 CCR § 559))*

**This form is to be used for all Contract-Related Disclosures, including Proposals.**

Please refer to title 2 California Code Regulations section 559.1 (b)(1) through (b)(3), prior to completing this form.

a. Solicitation or Contract Number:

No. 2024-9420

b. Proposer or Contractor Name:

Willing Observers LLC

c. Name of Individual Authorized to bind the Proposer or Contractor:

Luzilda Arciniega, PhD, Co-Founder

d. Contact Person (if different than above):

e. E-mail Address:

lucy@willingobservers.com

f. Phone No:

858-744-1130

g. Name of CalPERS Contact (if applicable):

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment E

Page 2 of 3

Have you, your firm or your firm's principals, employees, agents, or affiliates compensated or agreed to compensate, directly or indirectly, any Agent as defined in section 559.1(a)(1) (whether or not employed by you) or any entity to act as Agent in connection with this Solicitation or Contract? (§559.1 (b)(1))

☐ Yes. ☒ No.

**If you checked Yes, please respond to questions 1 through 5 below, and sign and date the Form on the final page.**

**If you checked No, please respond to question 5 below, and sign and date this Form on the final page.**

1. Please list the names and relationships for each Agent in connection with the CalPERS Solicitation or Contract, including a description of the relationship with the Proposer or Contractor. (Add an additional page if necessary.) Please check the box to the left if the Agent is a current or former CalPERS Board Member, Staff Member, consultant, or has a Familial Relationship with any such individual.

|                          | Name | Relationship |
|--------------------------|------|--------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |      |              |

2. Please attach a copy of all contracts, agreements, or other documents memorializing the relationship between the Proposer or Contractor and the Agent. When an *entity* is retained as an Agent, please also include the requested information for any officer, director, or employee actively providing Agent services with regard to CalPERS or receiving more than 15% of the Agent fees.
3. Provide a description of any financial or Familial Relationship(s) between the Agent and a Board Member or Staff Member, including the names of the Board Member(s) and/or Staff Members:

4. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Agent to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.
5. Describe any Things of Value given or offered by the Proposer or Contractor to a Board Member or Staff Member during the twelve (12) months preceding the date the Contract-Related Disclosure Form is due.

By executing this form the undersigned represents and warrants the information set forth herein is true and correct. The undersigned agrees to update this information within 14 calendar days of the date Proposer or Contractor knows or reasonably should have known of any defect or changes to this information.

The Contract-Related Disclosure Form and attachments shall be a public record subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act. No confidentiality restrictions shall be placed on information submitted by the Proposer or Contractor.

The undersigned represents and agrees it shall make a representation and warranty as to the continuing accuracy of this information in any final written agreement between it and CalPERS.

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I, the official named below, acknowledge and declare I have read and understand CCR section 559.1, and that the above-named firm has provided information required by section 559.1 and this Form. I am duly authorized to make this declaration on behalf of the above-named firm, and declare the foregoing is true and correct as of the date of execution of this document. I further acknowledge my firm's responsibility to provide updates in the event this information is determined to be incorrect or has changed.



Authorized Signature

6/17/25

Date

Luzilda Arciniega, PhD, Co-Founder

Name and Title

**California Public Employees' Retirement System**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Proposal Questionnaire**

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to submit responses and documentation as requested on this questionnaire. The information requested must be provided in the prescribed format; all questions must be repeated in their entirety before the answers are given. Responses that deviate materially from the prescribed format may lead to the rejection of the Proposal.

Document current and planned level of compliance with Revised 508 standards for all deliverables to be provided by the successful Proposer, including any electronic content that may be posted to the CalPERS website. Proposer may document its compliance by providing (a) its policy and procedures for validating the accessibility of electronic content; (b) a narrative description of said policy and procedures; or (c) a written Accessibility Conformance Report (ACR) for each Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Standards item that is to be developed, updated, configured for, and delivered to CalPERS. Any documentation provided in responding to this question should be based on the latest version of the Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) provided by the Industry Technology Industry Council (ITIC).

The response to all questions in the aggregate must be limited to twenty (20) pages maximum. Please note if a submission with more than twenty (20) pages is received only the first twenty (20) pages will be considered for scoring. Provide responses in the order the prompts are listed.

**A. ORGANIZATION and BACKGROUND**  
**(Pass/Fail)**

1. Name of your organization.

The name of the organization is **Willing Observers LLC**.

2. Location of headquarters.

4712 E 2nd St #744 Long Beach CA 90803

3. Location and address of branch which would provide services under this contract.

4712 E 2nd St #744 Long Beach CA 90803

4. Number of years your organization has been in business.

The number of years that the organization has been in business is 3 years 6 months.

5. Within the past five (5) years, have there been any significant changes in your organization's ownership, corporate officers, or principal business? If yes, please describe.

No.

6. Mission statement or statement of your organization's principal business. Please provide a copy of incorporation documents or other public documents that describe the primary focus of your firm.

The mission statement or statement of our organization's principal business is to work with individuals and organizations to help them develop cultural competencies that foster inclusion and equity. Founded by two PhD anthropologists, Dr. Luzilda (Lucy) Arciniega and Dr. Melissa (Missy) Maceyko, Willing Observers LLC knows that inequities are often difficult to change, because they are embedded in culture and appear normative. We train individuals to notice inequities and enable them to become effective change agents in the workplace and in society.

**B. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CONSULTING SERVICES CAPABILITIES  
(Pass/Fail)**

Please provide a summary of the services that your firm provided in the service categories below, in one or multiple of the following business sector(s); public, private, and/or non-profit; in which the work was performed. Clearly explain your experience in all business sector(s) for each category.

**1. Providing advisory services on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) best practices.**

To provide advisory services on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion best practices, Willing Observers LLC draws on both standard DEI best practices and local cultural insights to create strategies for sustainable culture-change. Since its establishment in 2021, the firm has provided a range of advisory services to integrate DEI best practices that are most meaningful to that organization, which may vary given characteristics of the organization, such as its size, maturity level, problem areas, demographic makeup, and/or strategic goals. We have offered these services to corporate clients, non-profit organizations, and higher-education institutions. All DEI consulting aligns DEI services to the "business case," of the organization, whether the business is to increase profits, achieve mission, or serve the community.

Moreover, Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko understand the laws and regulations governing public, private, non-profit, and governmental diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives. Both Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko, as experts, have helped professional organizations navigate the new and constantly-changing political terrain. Dr. Maceyko, as Chair, Public Policy, American Association for University Women CA, collaborates with board members, legislative advocates, and partners with organizations to set the annual legislative agenda and select co-sponsored and priority legislation. She also authors legislation and public education campaigns and sets

annual goals and budgets and manages sub-committee programs and agendas. As faculty in constitutional law, Dr. Maceyko is also currently working with an association of dozens of organizations to ensure that each organization has custom culture initiatives that are in compliance with their respective state and federal laws and, at the same time, can update their frameworks to continue expanding and deepening inclusion and belonging strategies for all. Willing Observers works with attorneys who are experts in employment law, discrimination, and social justice, as needed. Since the executive orders have passed, Willing Observers has created additional coalitions with Equal Rights Advocates Inc., Stronger California, Equality California.

Legal review will not incur CalPERS additional costs. Willing Observers will propose any firm or attorney that will be responsible for legal review to CalPERS for approval.

*Private corporate experience*

As the primary DEI consultants of Willing Observers, Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko have provided cultural assessments, DEI training, and DEI advisory services to private corporate firms and non-profit organizations. These cultural assessments are intended to help companies develop a DEI Strategic Plan and DEI strategies and initiatives that are meaningful to their organization and have the most chance for success. To do this, we assess the organization's values to identify how people understand and exemplify the values and points of alignment and misalignment across the organization and across leadership/employees, and any sectors that may emerge. We also assess DEI beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives seeking to understand what assumptions people have made about DEI, what they care about that is DEI-related, and what will create a meaningful impact in employees' lives. We align cultural values with DEI recommendations to provide custom recommendations to our clients for launching a DEI Strategic Plan, rebranding any initiatives that are needed, enhancing current DEI-related programming, and for launching and managing new initiatives.

*Private, non-profit experience*

Both Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko have provided training and DEI consulting to the Association of American University Women (AAUW), a non-profit 501(c)3 organization and political lobbying group. Dr. Maceyko has delivered DEI advisory services to the state governing board for almost five years, and has served on the state governing board for two years as the Director of Public Policy. During this time, Dr. Maceyko has offered ongoing training development support and subject-matter expertise to Board members regarding DEI issues on an ad hoc basis. In the last two years, Dr. Maceyko has advised the incoming Board President and DEI Committee on their approach to increase diversity in leadership and membership, suggesting the development of a data-driven DEI strategic plan prior to moving forward with continued reactive and/or ad hoc internal DEI training efforts. In her role as the Director of Public Policy, Dr. Maceyko works with a legislative advocate to set the organization's social justice and gender equity driven legislative agenda and to provide organization internal and external education on the DEI impacts of current and proposed legislation in California.

Dr. Arciniega has served as Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, overseeing a small team at the Salk Institute for Biological Sciences, a private non-profit 501(c)3 organization that is affiliated with the University of California, San Diego (UCSD). The Salk Institute is host to close to 50 renowned scientists, many of whom teach at UCSD. As such, Dr. Arciniega provided DEI advisory and subject-matter expertise services to faculty as they sought to increase diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in their labs, and in their engagement with undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral trainees. Since 2015, Dr. Arciniega has also worked with the National Diversity Council 501(c)3 as a facilitator and trainer, consultant in their DEI consulting network, and oversaw their NDC Index initiative, a DEI benchmarking service provided to companies with over 500 employees, and reviewed and updated the curriculum for their National Diversity Council Certified Diversity Professional program (NDCCDP).

Lastly, both Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko, as Willing Observers have engaged in numerous collaborative projects with the American Anthropological Association, a 501(c)3 organization, to support academic and professional anthropologists achieve DEI understandings and competencies and help them navigate the new political administration. Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko have provided webinars clarifying the anti-DEI executive orders and their impact for higher-education institutions and organizations that receive federal funding.

#### Public sector experience

As an adjunct professor at the California State University, Long Beach, Dr. Maceyko has designed and provided customized DEI trainings to faculty, administrators, students, and staff; offered data-driven campus climate recommendations for increasing gender diversity, equity, and inclusion on campus; and has served as Chair of the President's Commission on the Status of Women, providing DEI advisory services to the President's Office, the College of Liberal Arts, the anthropology department, the linguistic department, the political science department, and the Women's & Gender Equity Center. Dr. Maceyko also serves as a founding member of the Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation (TRHT) program at CSULB, advising on program development and implementation via collaboration with the Office of the Provost and a diverse team of students, faculty, staff, and community members. Dr. Arciniega and Dr. Maceyko have also provided DEI training and advisory services to the University of California, San Diego and University of California, Irvine. Dr. Arciniega has also provided DEI advisory consulting services to an Illinois community college seeking to increase equity and comply with the Illinois State Board mandate to enhance and provide measurable results to increase equity year-after-year. Dr. Arciniega designed an equity training and provided DEI feedback on the DEI strategic plan, pillars, and identified DEI gaps and potential solutions.

#### Revised 508 Standards Planned Compliance

Willing Observers understands that any training developed for CalPERS will be compliant with Revised 508 standards. They will work with a compliance expert to ensure virtual training, including but not limited to hosting services for electronic content, meet the accessibility requirements of the refreshed Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d). Dr.

Dr. Luzilda Arciniega has over a decade of conducting DEI best practices research and providing analysis and reports. She completed her dissertation on how DEI professionals create best practices and advocate for DEI in corporate firms. In her dissertation she assessed how diversity professionals used best practices tools, like the Global Diversity Equity Inclusion Benchmarks (GDEI), surveys from DiversityInc. (now Fair360) and Diversity Best Practices (now Seramount) to create strategic reports, create evidence of the impact of DEI initiatives, and compete in the labor market and against their industry competitors. Since the inauguration of President Trump, Fair360 and Seramount have made private the previously-public results of their benchmarking surveys.

With the National Diversity Council, she oversaw the NDC Index, a 200-question survey that measured organizational commitment to diversity and inclusion among companies in the U.S that had over 500 employees. Through an annual survey, the Index rated company performance on CEO engagement and corporate initiatives, policies, and programs. Dr. Arciniega designed the complimentary report given to all participating companies and gave advising sessions to participants and NDC partners to improve their NDC Index scores by implementing recommended DEI best practices. Additionally, she designed benchmarking reports to assess companies across the following areas: C-Suite engagement, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), Talent Development, and Workplace Inclusion. She also designed a report that compared companies' performance on DEI to those that scored 80 or more on the NDC Index, as well as an industry report for the Healthcare Industry.

In 2024, as a consultant, Dr. Arciniega oversaw the National Diversity Council's Certified Diversity Professional Program (NDCCDP) and updated the NDCCDP curriculum to include the most updated DEI best practices across different topics including Diversity Councils, Employee Resource Groups, Inclusive Recruiting, and DEI Awareness and Training. She has been a facilitator of various modules of the NDCCDP program since 2018, and graduated from the first NDCCDP cohort in 2015, receiving her Certified Diversity Professional certification.

#### **8. Advising on best practices in procurement.**

Drs. Arciniega and Maceyko have advised on the inclusion of DEI best practices in procurement. Working with companies that participated in the NDC Index, Dr. Luzilda Arciniega helped companies define the scope of their supplier diversity program and provide recommendations for how to scale the program through DEI supplier diversity best practices. She helped two companies at the early stages of their supplier diversity program create mission statements that aligned with their business outcomes and helped create a strategy that considers all suppliers of goods and services that the organization purchases and that links the program to organizational goals. Dr. Arciniega also supported the company as they communicated their supplier diversity program to key functions, management, and stakeholders to understand impact, significance, and obtain buy-in to participate in the program. Dr. Arciniega helped these companies identify minority/women-owned businesses through National Diversity Council company databases,





## **DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION**

CalPERS Board of Administration requires contract participation from certified Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs) in its contract process, unless specifically exempted. Only State of California, Office of Small Business and DVBE Services (OSDS) may certify a DVBE. The DVBE must perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation to be considered compliant with the DVBE program requirements. In order to obtain DVBE incentive participation credit, the contractor must be a certified DVBE **or** subcontract with a DVBE, certified by OSDS, **no later than** the Final Filing Date as specified in the Schedule of Events.

**Please read the following requirements carefully. Completion of this document is required regardless of intent to pursue DVBE incentive participation.**

### **I. DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this DVBE incentive participation, the following definitions apply:

- A. *Disabled veteran* means a veteran of the military, naval, or air services of the United States with a service-connected disability of ten percent or more, who is a resident of the State of California.**
- B. *DVBE* means a business concern certified by OSDS as meeting all of the following:**
  - 1. A sole proprietorship at least 51 percent owned by one or more disabled veterans; or in the case of a publicly owned business, at least 51 percent of its stock is owned by one or more disabled veterans; a subsidiary which is wholly owned by a parent corporation, but only if at least 51 percent of the voting stock of the parent corporation is owned by one or more disabled veterans; or a joint venture in which at least 51 percent of the joint venture's management and control and earnings are held by one or more disabled veterans.
  - 2. The management and control of the daily business operations are by one or more disabled veterans. The disabled veterans who exercise management and control are not required to be the same disabled veterans as the owners of the business concern.
  - 3. It is a sole proprietorship, corporation, or partnership with its home office located in the United States, which is not a branch or subsidiary of a foreign corporation, foreign firm, or other foreign based business.

**Note:** View certification information at <https://www.dgs.ca.gov/PD/About/Page-Content/PD-Branch-Intro-Accordion-List/OSDS/OSDS> or contact the OSDS at (916) 375-4940.

**C. *Commercially Useful Function* A DVBE contractor, subcontractors, or supplier is considered performing a commercially useful function when it meets all of the following criteria:**

1. The business concern is:
  - (a) Responsible for the execution of a distinct element of the work of the contract;
  - (b) Carries out its obligation by actually performing, managing, or supervising the work involved;
  - (c) Performs work that is normal for its business, services and function; and
2. The business concern is not further subcontracting a greater portion of the work that is greater than would be expected by normal industry practices.

A contractor, subcontractor, or supplier will not be considered to perform a commercially useful function if the contractor's, subcontractor's, or supplier's role is limited to that of an extra participant in a transaction, contract, or project through which funds are passed in order to obtain the appearance of small business, microbusiness, or DVBE participation. When subcontracting to small, micro, or DVBE subcontractors, the intent is for the subcontractor to provide goods or services required for the performance of the contract rather than artificial or incidental participation that provides an "appearance" of participation to meet the socio-economic objectives of these programs.

**II. DVBE PARTICIPATION OPTIONS AND DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to be **responsive** to the incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation and select one of the following options:

- A. **Option A - DVBE Incentive.** A bidder may submit DVBE participation percentages to receive and qualify for the incentive program. Bids that fail to submit the required form and confirm the level of DVBE participation will not be eligible to receive the DVBE incentive. Refer to RFP, Section V Proposal Requirements, A(8) Technical Proposal/Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation and Incentive.
- B. **Option B - No DVBE Incentive Participation.** A bidder may opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

### **USE/SUBSTITUTION OF PROPOSED DVBE**

If awarded the contract, the successful bidder must use the DVBE subcontractor and/or supplier proposed in their final bid/proposal unless the contractor requests substitution via prior written notice to CalPERS and CalPERS approves such substitution. At a minimum, the request must include:

- A. A written explanation for the substitution;
- B. The identity of the person or firm substituted;
- C. Any change in the work or dollar/percentage amount caused by the substitution; and
- D. A revised DVBE Contract Participation (Attachment G, Exhibit 1) and applicable certification(s).

The request and CalPERS approval or disapproval of the substitution shall not affect compliance with any other provision of law, or any other contract requirements relating to substitution of subcontractors.

### **III. QUESTIONS**

The information below is provided to answer commonly asked questions and clarify potential misconceptions of the contract participation goal requirement. If further clarification is necessary, you may contact CalPERS Contracts Officer at (916) 795-3020 or [oscd\\_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov](mailto:oscd_contractsadmin@calpers.ca.gov) for assistance.

#### **Meeting the Goal**

- 1. Proposing incentive goal attainment is a commitment to use disabled veteran business enterprises for the established percent of the contract amount. If awarded a contract, CalPERS expects the DVBE subcontractors or suppliers to be utilized as identified in your proposal, unless a substitution is approved by CalPERS.
- 2. An expression of intent to subcontract with unidentified DVBE firms at some future date is insufficient to comply with DVBE incentive participation. Commitments must be finalized upon submission of your contract participation documentation to CalPERS.
- 3. **Out-of-state firms** are not excluded from participating in the DVBE incentive program. To do business with CalPERS, completion of this document is required for all bidders.



## DISABLED VETERAN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE CONTRACT PARTICIPATION

In order to be responsive to incentive participation, bidders will complete and submit Attachment G, Exhibit 1, DVBE Contract Participation. Check the appropriate box to indicate the option with which you choose to comply. Please read all instructions carefully prior to completing this form. **Only California certified DVBEs who perform a commercially useful function relevant to this solicitation may be used to satisfy the DVBE program requirements.**

This solicitation does **not** have a DVBE participation requirement; however, you may still commit to an incentive percentage to obtain preference points.

- ☐ **Option A** - I commit to the percent listed below to qualify for the DVBE incentive program.
- ☐ 1% - 1.99%
- ☐ 2% - 2.99%
- ☐ 3% - 3.99%
- ☐ 4% - 4.99%
- ☐ 5% or Over
- ☒ **Option B** - I opt out of participating in the DVBE incentive program.

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**In order to meet the DVBE participation requirement, list one or more DVBE vendors and the work to be performed.**

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

**DVBE Company Name:**

**E-mail (if available):**

**DVBE Certification Number:**

**Telephone Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Contact Name:**

**Fax Number:** (XXX) XXX-XXXX

**Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:**

**Please check the following if the vendor is Small Business or Micro Business:**

☐ SB ☐ MB

**Work performed or goods provided for this contract:**

---

- ☐ I commit to utilizing one or more of the DVBEs listed above in order to meet the total claimed DVBE% indicated, and certify that the DVBE vendor(s) listed above have been notified and agree to provide services for this contract.

Total DVBE % \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- ☒ I opt out of participation in the DVBE incentive program.

Contractor Signature

Date Signed

 \_\_\_\_\_

06/28/25

\_\_\_\_\_

### List of Proposed Subcontractors

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this attachment. Please check the applicable box. (A photo copy of this form is acceptable if additional sheets are required.)

- ☐ No subcontractors will be used.
- ☐ No subcontractors will be used other than the DVBE firms identified on Attachment G, Exhibit 1.
- ☒ The following subcontractors will be employed and will perform the work or services identified below.
- ☐ Non-small business preference to be applied by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.

---

|                                                       |                                                                                                                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Company Name:                                         | Global Latitudes                                                                                                                    | cecilia@globallatitudes.org      |
| Contact Name:                                         | Cecilia Orellana-Rojas, PhD                                                                                                         | Telephone Number: (210) 219-9308 |
| Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:             | 4127 High Sierra Dr. San Antonio, TX 78228                                                                                          |                                  |
| Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor: | Support with data analysis, program review and evaluation, and action plan recommendations particularly against DEI best practices. |                                  |
| Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup> :   | 10%                                                                                                                                 |                                  |

---

|                                                       |                                                                                                |                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Company Name:                                         | Great Heron Insights LLC                                                                       |                                  |
| Contact Name:                                         | Melissa Vogel, PhD                                                                             | Telephone Number: (864) 752-7187 |
| Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:             | 8401 Mayland Dr. STE A Richmond, VA 23294                                                      |                                  |
| Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor: | Support with qualitative and quantitative data collection, data analysis, and pattern finding. |                                  |
| Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup> :   | 10%                                                                                            |                                  |

---

1 If your firm is claiming the non-small business preference by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.

### List of Proposed Subcontractors

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this attachment. Please check the applicable box. (A photo copy of this form is acceptable if additional sheets are required.)

- ☐ No subcontractors will be used.
- ☐ No subcontractors will be used other than the DVBE firms identified on Attachment G, Exhibit 1.
- ☒ The following subcontractors will be employed and will perform the work or services identified below.
- ☐ Non-small business preference to be applied by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.

---

Company Name: Alex Brueggeman

Contact Name: Alex Brueggeman

Telephone Number: 520-404-1102

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:

838 Flatbush Ave, APT 3D Brooklyn, NY 11226

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:

Support with DEIB initiative evaluation and action plan implementation. Support with development of inclusive communication strategies.

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>: 10%

---

Company Name:

Contact Name:

Telephone Number:

Street Address, City, State and Zip Code:

Description of Work to be Performed by Subcontractor:

Percentage of Total Agreement Amount <sup>1</sup>:

---

1 If your firm is claiming the non-small business preference by committing to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of your net bid to one or more California-certified small business(es) or micro business(es), identify the percentage of work that will be performed by the subcontractor.





**Required Attachments Certification Checklist**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Services**  
**Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420**

Firm's Name: Willing Observers LLC

As prescribed in Section V of the Request for Proposal, all Proposers are required to complete and return this Attachment. Complete the "Proposer Certification" column and submit this checklist to confirm the items submitted with your Proposal. CalPERS staff will use the shaded "CalPERS Verification" column to confirm receipt of all required documents.

| Attachment Name/Description                                                                                                                                                             | Proposer Certification                                                 | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted Cover Letter signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                                                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| a. A statement to the effect that the proposal is a firm and irrevocable offer good for 180 calendar days.                                                                              |                                                                        |                                                             |
| b. A statement expressing the Proposer's willingness to perform the services as described in this RFP.                                                                                  |                                                                        |                                                             |
| c. A statement expressing the Proposer's availability of staff and other required resources for performing all services and providing all deliverables as described in the RFP.         |                                                                        |                                                             |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment of Proposal packages as specified in the RFP.                                                                                                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF marked " <b>Master Copy</b> " containing original signatures.                                                                                                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted one (1) PDF attachment marked " <b>Reproduction Copy.</b> " All pages containing proprietary information should be removed and a cover sheet must be included which provides: | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 1. the firm's names;                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                        |                                                             |
| 2. total number of pages; and                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                        |                                                             |
| 3. identification of all pages removed due to proprietary information.                                                                                                                  |                                                                        |                                                             |
| <b>Note: Entire proposal may not be marked confidential and proprietary.</b>                                                                                                            |                                                                        |                                                             |
| Submitted Minimum Qualifications Certification (Attachment A) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Proposal/Proposer Certification Sheet (Attachment B) signed by an individual authorized to bind the Proposer contractually.                                                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Small Business certified? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                           |                                                                        |                                                             |
| DVBE certified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                                     |                                                                        |                                                             |
| Micro Business certified? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                           |                                                                        |                                                             |

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment I

Page 2 of 3

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                        |                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Submitted California Taxpayer and Shareholder Protection Act Declaration (Attachment C) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contracting Act Declarations (Attachment D) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted Contract-Related Disclosure Form (Attachment E) signed by an individual authorized to make the declaration on behalf of the Proposer.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Proposal Questionnaire (Attachment F)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise Contract Participation (Attachment G, including Exhibit 1)</p> <p>Option A - Meets DVBE Participation? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No<br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option B - DVBE Incentive Claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No<br/>_____ % Claimed</p> <p>Option C – Elected no DVBE participation? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Option D – California Certified Micro Business? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>List of Proposed Subcontractors (Attachment H)</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference Claimed? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Required Attachments Certification Checklist (Attachment I)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Joint Venture proposal?</p> <p>If yes, was documentation submitted describing the responsibilities of each party in the Joint Venture, Exhibit 1? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Submitting a Preference Program request?</p> <p>Small Business Preference claimed? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Non-Small Business Preference claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Target Area Contract Preference Act claimed? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <p>Is the Corporation registered and in good standing to do business? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Submit current copy of a Secretary of State Certification or Business License<br/>(Check the California Secretary of State website at <a href="https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business">https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov/search/business</a> to verify status)</p> <p>Is the company an LLP? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>                                                                                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Submitted the Fee Proposal (Attachment J) in a separate document in the Proposal package email. Fee Proposal clearly labeled as <b>"FEE PROPOSAL FOR RFP NO. 2024-9375, submitted by [YOUR COMPANY NAME]."</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

| Verifications Performed by CalPERS Staff                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | CalPERS Verification                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Has Contractor been decertified by the Department of Fair Employment and Housing?<br/>(Check the California Regulatory Notice Register at <a href="https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/">https://oal.ca.gov/publications/notice_register/</a>)</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |

California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS)

Request for Proposal No. 2024-9420

Attachment I

Page 3 of 3

Comments:

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Signature of CalPERS Reviewer

---

Date



# Secretary of State

## Certificate of Status

I, SHIRLEY N. WEBER, PH.D., California Secretary of State, hereby certify:

**Entity Name:** WILLING OBSERVERS LLC  
**Entity No.:** 202134310167  
**Registration Date:** 12/07/2021  
**Entity Type:** Limited Liability Company - CA  
**Formed In:** CALIFORNIA  
**Status:** Active

The above referenced entity is active on the Secretary of State's records and is authorized to exercise all its powers, rights and privileges in California.

This certificate relates to the status of the entity on the Secretary of State's records as of the date of this certificate and does not reflect documents that are pending review or other events that may impact status.

No information is available from this office regarding the financial condition, status of licenses, if any, business activities or practices of the entity.



**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I execute this certificate and affix the Great Seal of the State of California this day of June 26, 2025.

**SHIRLEY N. WEBER, PH.D.**  
**Secretary of State**

**Certificate No.:** 341907329

To verify the issuance of this Certificate, use the Certificate No. above with the Secretary of State Certification Verification Search available at [bizfileOnline.sos.ca.gov](http://bizfileOnline.sos.ca.gov).



Printed on: 6/26/2025 11:16:16 AM  
To verify most current certification status go to: <https://www.caleprocure.ca.gov>

## Office of Small Business & DVBE Services

Certification ID: 2041585

Legal Business Name:  
Willing Observers LLC

Doing Business As (DBA) Name 1:

Doing Business As (DBA) Name 2:

Address:  
4712 E. 2nd St.  
#744  
Long Beach  
CA 90803

Email Address:  
[lucy@willingobservers.com](mailto:lucy@willingobservers.com)  
Business Web Page:  
Business Phone Number:  
510/395-0222  
Business Fax Number:  
  
Business Types:  
Service

| Certification Type | Status   | From       | To         |
|--------------------|----------|------------|------------|
| SB(Micro)          | Approved | 10/10/2024 | 10/31/2026 |

Stay informed! KEEP YOUR CERTIFICATION PROFILE UPDATED!  
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Questions?  
Email: [OSDSHELP@DGS.CA.GOV](mailto:OSDSHELP@DGS.CA.GOV)  
Call OSDS Main Number: 916-375-4940  
707 3rd Street, 1-400, West Sacramento, CA 95605

**Multi-Member LLC Operating Agreement  
of  
Willing Observers LLC**

**1. COMPANY.** This LLC Operating Agreement (“Agreement”) entered as of the undersigned date shall take effect on October 9 2024, between the Company and its Members mentioned herein:

**a.) Formation Details.**

Company Name: Willing Observers LLC

Principal Address: 4712 E 2nd St, #744, Long Beach, California, 90803

State of Formation: California

Date of Formation: 12/07/2021

**b.) Tax Classification.** The Company shall be classified for tax purposes as a(n) Partnership.

**c.) Business Purpose.** Willing Observers LLC provides consulting, advising, and management services, drawing on both standard DEI best practices and local cultural insights to create strategies to help organizations engage in sustainable and inclusive culture-change

**d.) Term.** In Perpetuity.

**e.) Fiscal Year-End (Tax Purposes).** The last day of the month of December.

**2. MEMBERS.** The Company is formed with the following Members:

**1<sup>st</sup> Member**

Name: Melissa Maceyko

Ownership: 50%

Mailing Address: 238 A Prospect Ave, Long Beach, California, 90803

**2<sup>nd</sup> Member**

Name: Luzilda C. Arciniega

Ownership: 50%

Mailing Address: 3801 S Harvard Blvd, Los Angeles, California, 90062

**3. VOTING REQUIREMENTS.**

**a.) Business Decisions.** Business decisions related to the Company’s activities, finances, and management shall be made by majority decision by the Members.

**b.) Amending this Agreement.** Any amendments to this Agreement shall be made by majority decision by the Members.

**c.) Adding New Members.** Adding new Members to this Company shall be made by majority decision by the Members.

**d.) Withdrawing Members.** To allow Members to withdraw shall be made by majority decision by the Members.

e.) **Dissolving the Company.** To dissolve the Company and cease business activities, this shall be made by majority decision by the Members.

**4. VOTING RIGHTS.** When votes are cast by Members as required under Section 3, or for any decision regarding the Company, each Member's vote shall be counted equally, regardless of their ownership of the Company.

**5. MANAGEMENT.** Any and all decisions of the Company shall be made by the Members.

**6. MEMBERS' AUTHORITY.** The authority to make decisions that can potentially bind the Company, legally or financially, can be made by any Member.

**7. DISTRIBUTIONS.** Company profits shall be distributed at the Members' sole discretion.

**8. MEETINGS.** Company meetings shall be held, with all Members expected to be present, only when required or called upon by the Members.

**9. PROFITS AND LOSSES.** The allocation of profits and losses of the Company shall be shared equally among the Members, no matter their ownership interest.

**10. NON-COMPETE.** A Member's ability to compete in the same or similar business as the Company shall be prohibited and not allowed under any circumstance.

**11. CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS.** No initial Capital Contributions shall be made at the time of this Agreement by any of the Members.

**12. TIME COMMITMENTS.** No Member is required to devote time to the Company as part of their ownership interest.

**13. ANNUAL REPORTS.** The Company must provide the following to each of the Members: tax reports (K-1 forms and annual tax returns), profit and loss (summary), income statement, balance sheet, cash flow statement,

**14. SELLING TO NON-MEMBERS.** not allowed to sell to non-Members. No Member is permitted to assign, transfer, sell, pledge, or otherwise dispose of their ownership interest in the Company to non-Members, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, without all the other Members' prior unanimous written consent.

**15. RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL.** If a Member decides to sell, assign, transfer, or otherwise dispose of ownership interest in the Company, the Company or its Members must be given the same rights to purchase under the same terms and conditions.

**16. LIABILITY.** If any Member and any authorized person acting under the management of the Company, or under the capacity of any officer, director, stockholder, partner, member, affiliate, employee, agent, or representative of the Company ("Covered Person") shall not be liable to the Company or any Covered Person for any loss, damage, or claim incurred because of any action taken or omitted to be taken by such Covered Person in their respective capacity, so long as such action or omission does not constitute fraud or willful misconduct. This Agreement is not intended to, and shall not, create or impose any fiduciary duty on any Covered Person. Each Member and the Company hereby waive any fiduciary duties that, absent such waiver, may be implied by Governing Law, and in doing so, acknowledge and agree that the duties and obligations of

each Covered Person to each other and the Company are only as expressly outlined in this Agreement. The provisions of this Agreement, to the extent that they restrict the duties and liabilities of a Covered Person otherwise existing or at law or in equity, are agreed by each Member to replace such other duties and liabilities.

**17. INDEMNIFICATION.** The Company will indemnify any person who is or was a defendant, or is threatened to be made a defendant, in a pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding (excluding actions by or in the right of the Company) due to their role as a Member, employee, or agent of the Company, or their service at the Company's request. This indemnification covers expenses (including attorney's fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement that are actually and reasonably incurred in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding, provided that the Member determines the individual's actions were in, or not opposed to, the best interest of the Company. For any criminal action or proceeding, the individual must have had no reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or plea of no contest does not by itself create a presumption regarding whether the person acted in good faith or in a manner they reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the Company, or, in the case of a criminal action or proceeding, whether they had reasonable cause to believe their conduct was lawful.

**18. CAPITAL CONTRIBUTIONS.** The Members may make an initial Capital Contribution, although there is no obligation to make such a contribution unless otherwise mentioned. If a Capital Contribution is made, it shall not receive interest based on its cash amount or non-cash value. Any Capital Contributions made shall be reflected in the capital accounts. Return of any Capital Contributions, if made, shall be at the Members' discretion. It is understood by all Members that Capital Contributions made are not loans to the Company.

a.) Additional Contributions. Capital Contributions may be added from time to time in accordance with the needs of the Company. If an additional Capital Contribution is required, and a Member is unwilling or unable to meet the additional contribution requirement within the period granted to all other Members, the remaining Members may contribute proportionately to their existing Capital Contributions to resolve the amount in default. In such case, the allocation of profits, losses, and distribution of assets shall be adjusted accordingly to compensate for the Member's deficiency. Any Capital Contribution made by a Member more than the amounts provided in this Agreement, specifically cash payments, shall be deemed a debt due from the Company rather than an increase in the Capital Contributions from a specific Member. This liability shall be repaid with interest at such rates that are voted upon by the remaining Members. This liability shall not entitle the lending Member to any increased share of the Company's profits nor a greater voting power. Repayment of such Company debts shall take precedence over any other future payments to the remaining Members.

b.) Contractual Obligations. If any Member fails to fulfill their Capital Contribution mentioned in this Agreement within 90 days, they agree to be withdrawn from the Company, and their ownership shall be forfeited in proportion to the ownership of the remaining Members. This section is in addition to and does not replace, any other rights the Company may have against the Member, including the right to specific performance.

c.) Interest. No interest or borrowing fees shall be charged with the Capital Contributions made by Members.

d.) Withdrawal. No Member shall be able to withdraw any portion of their Capital Contributions without the unanimous written consent of the other Members.

**19. INVOLUNTARY WITHDRAWAL.** The circumstances leading to the involuntary removal from the Company include but are not limited to the death of a Member, mental incapacity, disability preventing reasonable participation in the Company, incompetence, breach of fiduciary duties, criminal conviction, legal actions against a Member, or a legal judgment that could harm the business or societal reputation of the



Company. A Member may also be expelled upon application by the Company or another Member if it is judicially determined that the Member has engaged in wrongful conduct that significantly and negatively impacts the Company's business; has willfully or repeatedly committed a material breach of this Agreement or a duty owed to the Company or other Members; or has engaged in conduct related to the Company's business that makes it impractical to continue business operations with that Member. The involuntary withdrawal of a Member does not affect the continuation of the Company.

**20. WITHDRAWING MEMBERS.** A Member can withdraw from the Company if permitted under the voting requirements. If a Member decides to withdraw, they must provide written notice to the Company, which shall be voted upon at the next meeting. If a request to withdraw from the Company is voted on and accepted, it must be processed and finalized within a reasonable time period. After the withdrawing Member's departure, the remaining Members can decide whether or not to dissolve the Company.

**21. DISSOCIATION.** When a Member withdraws from the Company, voluntarily or involuntarily, and the remaining Members decide to purchase the withdrawing Member's ownership interest, they must provide written notice of their decision. This notice, detailing the purchase price and the payment method and schedule, should be given to the withdrawing Member or their legal representative within a reasonable time after the change in circumstances is known. The buyout amount for the Member's interests will be determined according to Section 23 of this Agreement. The remaining Members shall have the right to seek damages from the departing Member if the withdrawal occurred due to malicious or criminal actions, a breach of fiduciary duties, or any conduct likely to harm the Company or its reputation in the public domain. A withdrawing Member is only liable for Company obligations incurred during their time as a Member. After withdrawal, the Company will handle all legal notices to protect the departing Member from future liabilities. If the remaining Members buy out the departing Member's ownership interest, the full payment shall be made within 90 days of withdrawal, without interest. The Company retains exclusive rights to all trade names, firm names, and related brand and model names, regardless of the Member's name on the application or renewal certificates.

**22. DISSOLUTION.** At the Member's decision, the affairs of the Company may be wound down and dissolved. Upon the dissolution of the Company, it shall immediately commence to wind down its affairs and for the Member to liquidate, sell, or transfer the business operations and assets of the Company. If debts are owed at the time of dissolution, the Company must pay creditors first before distributing cash, assets, and/or initial capital to the Member or any other economic interests.

**23. EQUAL FINANCIAL INTEREST.** In the event of a dissociation or dissolution, each Member shall retain an equal financial interest in the Company in accordance with their ownership interest. Without a written agreement establishing a value, the Company's value shall be assessed based on the fair market value of all Company assets minus liabilities while following generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). An independent accounting firm, mutually agreed upon by all Members, shall conduct such appraisal. An appraiser shall be appointed within a reasonable period following the dissociation or dissolution. The appraisal's results will be binding on all Members. This section ensures the Company's survival despite any Member's dissociation. No value should be assigned to goodwill, trade names, patents, or other intangible assets unless these assets were recorded in the Company's records before any such valuation.

**24. SEVERABILITY.** If any provision of this Agreement shall be declared to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable, such provision shall survive to the extent it is not so declared, and the validity, legality, and enforceability of the other provisions hereof shall not in any way be affected or impaired thereby unless such action would substantially impair the benefits to any party of the remaining provisions of this Agreement.

**25. MISCELLANEOUS.**

- a.) Amendments. Any amendment to this Agreement must be agreed to in accordance with the Voting Requirements in Section 3(b). After a successful vote, the approving Members must sign the amendment and attach it to this Agreement.
- b.) Audit Rights. Each Member shall have the right, at their own expense, to audit the financials of the Company. Such audits shall be conducted during normal business hours and with reasonable notice. During the audit, the Company shall make available all necessary books, records, and documents relevant to the Company's financial condition, including but not limited to the general ledger, spreadsheets, bank statements, tax returns, and any related financial documents.
- c.) Binding Arrangement. This Agreement and the terms and conditions contained herein apply to and are binding upon each Member's successors, assigns, executors, administrators, beneficiaries, and representatives.
- d.) Business Days. Refers to the standard five days of the work week, Monday through Friday, excluding federally recognized public holidays.
- e.) Business Decisions. As mentioned in Section 3(a), refers to a wide range of decisions to be made on behalf of the Company, including but not limited to the day-to-day activities, entering into agreements with third parties, lending money, obtaining loans, buying or selling assets, and any other act that directly or indirectly affects the Company's operations, assets, and liabilities.
- f.) Forbidden Acts. Members are strictly forbidden from any act that:
- i. Is in contravention of this Agreement;
  - ii. Permits, intentionally or unintentionally, the assignment of express, implied, or apparent authority to a third party that is not a Member;
  - iii. Would make it impossible to carry on the ordinary business of the Company;
  - iv. Will have the right or authority to bind or obligate the Company to any extent with regard to any matter outside the intended purpose of the Company;
  - v. Confesses a judgment against the Company; or
  - vi. Violates any of the forbidden acts in this section of which shall be deemed an involuntary withdrawal and may be treated accordingly by the remaining Members.
- g.) Fiscal Year-End. Shall be the last day of the month mentioned in Section 1(e).
- h.) Force Majeure. A Member shall be free of liability to the Company where the Member is prevented from executing their obligations under this Agreement in whole or in part due to force majeure, also known as acts of God, which include but are not limited to floods, fires, and other natural disasters. In addition, this includes human-created acts such as terrorism, war, or other types of attacks which are unforeseen or out of the control of the Company or its Members. A Member must communicate the circumstance of any such event mentioned in this section to the other Members and to take all appropriate action to satisfy the Company's duties and obligations and mitigate the effects of said event.
- i.) Goodwill. The Company's goodwill shall be assessed at an amount to be determined by appraisal using generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).
- j.) Governing Law. This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the statutory laws, regulations, and rules of the State of Formation without giving effect to any choice or conflict of law provision or rule, whether of the State of Formation or any other jurisdiction.
- i. Precedence of Agreement. In the event a provision of this Agreement shall differ from what is written under Governing Law, this Agreement shall take precedence to the extent it is legal.
- k.) Liability Insurance. The Company is allowed to acquire insurance on behalf of any Member, employee, agent, or other person engaged in the Company's business interests against any liability asserted against them or incurred by them while acting in good faith on behalf of the Company.
- l.) Life Insurance. The Company shall have the right to acquire life insurance on the lives of any or all of the Members whenever it is deemed necessary. Each Member shall cooperate fully with the Company in obtaining any such policies.

m.) Management. The Company's business and affairs shall be managed, operated, and controlled by or under the selection made in Section 4. Such management selection shall have full authority to take necessary actions to achieve the Company's objectives and legally bind the Company into certain agreements and contracts. No other individual or entity has the authority to act on behalf of the Company unless specific written authority has otherwise been granted.

i. Manager's Removal. If the Company is managed by a Manager, the Members can remove the Manager at any time by vote in accordance with Section 3(a).

ii. Manager's Compensation. If compensation is paid to a Manager who is making decisions on behalf of the Company, the payment made by the Company to the Manager is for their services performed. The compensation amount can be changed at any time, whether or not it is amended in this Agreement.

n.) Meetings. For any issue or subject matter regarding the company, a meeting can be requested and scheduled by providing reasonable notice to the other Members.

i. Meeting Agenda. If a Member requests an agenda prior to a meeting, it must be provided to the Members within a reasonable time before the meeting and outline the topics to be discussed.

ii. Meeting Minutes. Notes on the topics covered in a meeting should be made available to each Member after a meeting. This should include the topics of discussion, recording of votes, agreements made, or any consensus of decisions made among the Members.

iii. Voting. Any decision related to the company's business affairs can be voted upon. Any Member can request a vote.

iv. Quorum. A quorum for conducting business at a meeting shall consist of Members representing at least 50% of the Company's ownership.

o.) Members. A Member mentioned herein is a legal and registered owner of the Company in accordance with any conditions, stipulations, or obligations outlined in this Agreement.

p.) Non-Compete. A non-compete, if beholden under this Agreement, shall bear the following protections to the Company and limitations upon each Member:

i. Confidentiality. To protect the Company's business interests, including but not limited to its trade secrets, confidential information, and customer relationships.

ii. Restrictive Covenant. During the membership in the Company and for a period of one year following the termination of membership, sale of the Company, or upon its dissolution, a Member cannot, directly or indirectly, engage in, own, manage, operate, control, be employed by, participate in, or be connected in any manner with the ownership, management, operation, or control of any business that competes with or is similar to the business of the Company for a geographic area covering the United States.

iii. Non-Solicitation. During the membership in the Company and for a period of one year following the termination of membership, sale of the Company, or upon its dissolution, a Member cannot, directly or indirectly, solicit or attempt to solicit any employee, contractor, customer, or client of the Company for the purpose in engaging in a business that competes with the Company.

q.) Officers. Individuals who may or may not be members shall be elected and appointed by vote as part of the general decisions of the Company. Officers may be changed, re-appointed, or vacated at any time.

r.) Ownership of Company Property. Ownership of all Company property shall be titled in the Company's name, not any individual Members.

s.) Purpose. The business purpose is written in this Agreement for documentation reasons only. The Company is entitled to perform, engage, or be associated with any legal business purpose under the law.

t.) Record-Keeping. The Company shall always maintain the following records for access to any of the Members:

- i. Financial Status. Information related to the Company's business status and financial condition.
- ii. Tax Records. A copy of Federal, State, County, and any other tax records, filings, statements, and receipts for a period as required per Internal Revenue Service rules.
- iii. Members' Details. The details of each Member, including but not limited to their contact details, ownership interest, capital contributions, loans, distributions, and the date of becoming a Member.
- iv. Company Records. The Company shall retain all its agreements, such as this Agreement and with any third parties. In addition, any formation documents such as articles of organization or any documents filed with the State or Federal authorities must be kept in a safe and accessible location available to any of the Members.
- v. Right to Access. Each Member shall have the right to access a copy of any of the Company records mentioned herein provided that reasonable time has been given to produce such request.
- u.) Registered Agent. The registered agent and office of the Company shall be the same as recorded and filed with the Secretary of State. Such details were recorded and filed with the Secretary of State on the formation documents or when filing an annual report.
  - i. Service of Process. The registered agent and office of the Company shall serve as the service of process. As required by Governing Law, the registered agent shall meet the requirements of being open to accept notices.
- v.) Right of First Refusal.
  - i. First Priority. The Company shall have first priority to accept the sale terms of a separate offer for the purchase of Company ownership within 15 business days from receipt of notice.
  - ii. Second Priority. The Members shall collectively have a second priority in accepting the sale terms of a separate offer to purchase Company ownership. Each Member shall have a period of 5 business days from receipt of notice to accept, with priority given to Members with the largest allocation of ownership.
  - iii. Same Terms. If the Company or any Member agrees to the terms of the first right of refusal, they shall be obligated to purchase such Company ownership under the same terms as the separate offer unless otherwise agreed upon by the selling Member.
  - iv. Minimum Timeframe. Regardless of the terms mentioned in any separate offer, a purchaser acting on their right of first refusal shall have a minimum of 120 days to close and complete the sale.
- w.) Secretary of State. Refers to the office or department where the Company is registered in the State of Governing Law. The term "Secretary of State" is a general term, whether or not such office exists with such title in the State of Governing Law or if the Secretary of State's office is responsible for the formation of business entities.
- x.) Time. Time is of the essence in this Agreement. Any delay in the performance of obligations shall constitute a material breach.
- y.) Time Commitments. If any Member is required to commit time to the Company, it shall be dedicated to its business affairs as determined by the Members. If a Member that is beholden to this Time Commitment requirement does not fulfill their performance to the full term mentioned, their ownership under this Agreement can be subject to forfeiture.

**26. ENTIRE AGREEMENT.** This Agreement contains the entire agreement between the Members with all negotiations and understandings having been included. Any statements or representations that may have been made by any Member during the negotiation stages of this Agreement, may in some way be inconsistent with this final written Agreement. All such statements have no force or effect with respect to this Agreement. Only the written terms of this Agreement shall bind the Members.

**27. ACKNOWLEDGMENT.** By signing below, the undersigned acknowledge that they have read and agree to this Agreement, including all terms and conditions. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts, each of which shall be an original, and all of which shall constitute one instrument.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this Agreement as of the day and year first above written.

**Member's Signature:** Melissa Maceyko Date: 10/09/24  
Print Name: Melissa Maceyko

**Member's Signature:** Luzilda Arciniega Date: 10/09/24  
Print Name: Luzilda C. Arciniega