

SUMNER COUNTY, TENNESSEE



REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF INTEREST & QUALIFICATIONS FOR

Consulting Services for Oversight, Accounting, and Compliance for American Rescue Plan Act Funds

Release Date: September 16, 2021

Sumner County, Tennessee, an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer, seeks to retain the services of a professional consultant firm accounting and/or legal consulting firms to provide professional services related to guidance, oversight, and compliance for American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funds. The qualified Consultant firm will assist with plan development, reporting, and grant management for the County's award through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Qualification submittals must be received by **10:00 AM Local Time on Thursday October 14, 2021**. Late Qualifications will be neither considered nor returned. Questions related to this RFQ must be received by 2:00 PM local time on Thursday September 30, 2021. No pre-bid conference will be conducted.

DELIVER QUALIFICATIONS TO:

Sumner County Government
Attn: Purchasing Supervisor
355 North Belvedere Drive, Room 302
Gallatin TN 37066

**The envelope exterior must show the
project name, company name, address,
and closing date.**

**SECTION I
GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- 1.1 **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** Requests for additional information can be emailed to purchasing@sumnercountyttn.gov. Questions must be received by 2:00 PM local time on Thursday September 30, 2021. All responses to inquiries will be posted on the Sumner County website (<http://www.sumnertn.org/>) under the “Bid Notices” link. Any inquiries received will not be answered individually, but will be posted for all interested vendors.
- 1.2 **ACCEPTANCE:** Respondents shall hold their submittal firm and subject to acceptance by Sumner County for a period of ninety (90) business days from the date of the Qualification closing, unless otherwise indicated in their Qualification.
- 1.3 **AWARD:** It is the intent of the Owner to negotiate a fee and enter into a contract with a firm, to provide the ADA self-evaluation and transition plan services for the listed Project (s).
- 1.4 **COPIES:** Sumner County requires that Letters of Interest & Qualifications be submitted as one (1) original hard copy and two (2) exact copies for a total of three (3) qualification submittal responses. Additionally, Sumner County requests the submittal be submitted in digital format on a flash drive or compact disc.
- 1.5 **DECLARATIVE STATEMENTS:** Any statement or words (e.g.: must, shall, will) are declarative statements and the respondent must comply with the condition. Failure to comply with any such condition may result in their Qualification being non-responsive and disqualified.
- 1.6 **ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF QUALIFICATIONS:** Sumner County **will not** accept electronically transmitted responses when responding. Facsimile submission is strictly prohibited. All responses must be mailed or delivered by hand.
- 1.7 **INCURRED COSTS:** Sumner County will not be responsible for any costs incurred by the firms in the preparation of their response.
- 1.8 **NO CONTACT POLICY:** After the date and time that the vendor receives this solicitation, any contact initiated by any respondent with any Sumner County representative, other than the questions concerning this Request for Qualification, is strictly prohibited.
- 1.9 **QUALIFICATION DELIVERY:** Sumner County requires respondents, when hand-delivering responses, to have the sealed envelope to be time and date stamped in the Office of the Finance Department at the time of deposit. Sumner County will not be responsible for any lost or misdirected mail sent by the common carrier. Sumner County shall also not be responsible for responses delivered to other addresses other than the one listed at the top of this solicitation. The clock in the Sumner County Finance Office shall serve as the official record of time.

- 1.10 **SIGNING OF QUALIFICATIONS:** In order to be considered, all Qualifications must be signed. Please sign the original in blue ink. By signing the response document, the respondent acknowledges and accepts the terms and conditions stated in the Qualification document.
- 1.11 **NO DISCRIMINATION:** Sumner County does not discriminate towards any individual or business on the basis of race, sex, color, age, religion, national origin, disability, or veteran status. The successful firm(s) agrees that they shall comply with all local, state, and federal law, statutes, and regulations including, but not limited to, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- 1.12 **FORUM SELECTION:** Any contract will be interpreted under the laws and statutes of the state of Tennessee. Sumner County does not enter into contracts which provide for mediation or arbitration. Any action arising from any contract made from this Qualification shall be brought in the state courts in Sumner County, Tennessee or in the United States Federal District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee.
- 1.13 **NULLIFICATION:** Sumner County may, at any time, nullify the agreement if, in the judgment of Sumner County, the firm(s) have failed to comply with the terms of the agreement. In the event of nullification, any payment due in arrears will be made to the firm(s), but no further sums shall be owed to the firm(s).
- 1.14 **OPEN RECORDS ACT:** After Qualifications are accepted, all Qualifications will be subject to the Tennessee Open Records Act, and the proposals will be available to the public upon written request. Summary information on Qualifications submitted will be posted on the Sumner County Government website at <http://www.sumnertn.org/> under the "Bids" link.
- 1.15 **WAIVING OF INFORMALITIES:** Sumner County reserves the right to waive minor informalities or technicalities when it is in the best interest of Sumner County.

SECTION II SCOPE OF WORK

INTRODUCTION

Sumner County, Tennessee, an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer, seeks to retain the services of a professional qualified consultant firm to provide services related to the federal grants administration, accounting, and compliance services for the American Rescue Plan and related funding.

The County desires to identify and contract with a professional accounting consulting firm with certified public accountants that can be available for guidance and additional workload as needed over the next several years.

BACKGROUND

Sumner County, Tennessee, is a County with a population of approximately 191,000 located in the Middle Tennessee region. Sumner County's allocation from the Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is \$37.1 million. This funding must be obligated by December 30, 2024 and fully expended by December 30, 2026. This Project's goal is to identify and contract with a professional qualified accounting consultant firm to assist with the following duties:

- 1) Provide guidance for this direct funding authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act and related funding
- 2) Provide support and required services to complete the required reporting, monitoring, and general grant management
- 3) Ensure full compliance with all federal, state, and local laws in order to limit any subsequent audits and reviews
- 4) Provide guidance, grant management services, funds administration, and controls to assist Grants Administrator Kim Norfleet and all Sumner County, TN offices as necessary for coordination and strategic use of funds, compliance and technical assistance, and cost recovery and fiscal reporting.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

General Requirements:

1. Assist with review of grant requirements, guidance, and interpretation in accordance with uniform guidance 2 CFR, Part 200, and the interim/final rule of the American Rescue Plan Act and related funding.

2. Assist in funds administration and control procedures for the review of grant requirements, guidance, and interpretation for coordination and strategic use of funds. Maximize various federal and state funding sources (ex. ARPA local funding and coordination with state broadband funds from ARPA, future infrastructure bills, etc.)
3. Assist in funds administration and control procedures of grant proposals selected for funding. Provide technical assistance advisory services related to allowed uses and opinions regarding the eligibility of specific expenses to be covered by the American Rescue Plan Act funds available from federal, state, and other sources.
4. Review and assist with processing payment requests, determining allowable costs.
5. Assist in developing policies and procedures for administrative, accounting, and grant compliance oversight. Review contracts and purchasing documentation to ensure compliance of expenditures using federal, state, and local funds.
6. Advise on the proper fund structure, accounting standards, internal controls and compliance.
7. Assist with creation and maintenance of project files. These files must demonstrate compliance with all applicable state, local, and federal regulations.
8. Assist with compliance and monitoring of sub-recipients and beneficiaries, including review of funding requests submitted by sub-recipients as well as auditing for appropriate controls and documentation.
9. Assist in establishing an internal financial tracking system to ensure funds are expended within established timelines, recorded appropriately in the accounting system, and generate information needed for periodic reporting to the granting agency.
10. Provide oversight and guidance to guarantee compliance; assist with conducting required risk assessments and review of internal controls.
11. Assist with preparation of project files identified as the subject of monitoring visits and/or audits by any requesting entity.
12. Assist with preparation of monitoring and/or audit responses to findings and/or concerns.
13. Assist with all services necessary to complete and meet the required reporting requirements.
14. Assist with other grant administration-related activities and technical assistance as needed.

SECTION III CONTENT OF RESPONSES

A cover letter, highlighting the key points of the response, should be submitted. The letter should be executed by the owner / principal or authorized representative of the submitting firm.

In addition to the cover letter, submittals must contain the following information, provided in the order listed below. For joint venture proposals, separately identify the information as to each joint venture member. Concise and direct responses are encouraged.

1. **Table of Contents** – A table of contents referring to specific sections within the response to the RFQ.
2. **Identification** – Provide full legal name of the firm, mailing address, telephone number, fax number, email address and contact person for the firm which will have contractual responsibility for the Project. Identify year founded. Identify the number of employees for the firm as a whole, and at the offices where work will be performed. Identify any joint venture partners, or associated firms, with similar information. Note any prior working relationships and list relevant projects. Provide a description or history of the firm(s).
3. **Approach** –
 - Describe the applicant's approach with description of solutions and services to be provided for guidance, oversight, compliance and reporting for major federal grants to local and/or state governments.
 - If multiple firms are submitting as part of a single team, clearly identify the specific roles and responsibilities of each firm. Clarity in roles and responsibilities will be a factor in selection.
 - Describe the applicant's process for providing the accounting, financial management, and compliance services. Indicate how your firm solicits input and consulting services required for compliance with federal grants including but not limited to project management experience, state and federal ethics rules, identification and reporting of waste, fraud, and abuse; and experience with the oversight of disbursement and tracking of federal funds by state or federal agencies.
 - Again, if multiple firms are submitting as part of a single team, clearly identify the specific roles and responsibilities of each firm.
 - Describe the resources, capacity, and capability of the firm to provide the services requested and demonstration of quality control policies, procedures, and reporting.
4. **Compensation for Services** – Describe the fee schedules for hourly rates of all personnel/staffing anticipated for this Project and include the firm's fees. Firms must identify any fees and anticipated expenses applicable to the provision of the services. Fee schedules shall be submitted in a separately sealed document from the qualifications response document. (separate sealed document)

5. **Proposed Personnel** – Provide a written description of the key project team members. Show each individual's project function and title. Identify the lead person for the Project and provide the names and roles of all staff who will be involved in the Project.
6. **Resumes** – Provide resumes of each key proposed team member. Highlight relevant experience. Disclose any work that was completed with another firm.
7. **Project Experience** –
 - Provide descriptions, illustrations, photos and other representation material which illustrate the applicant's experience on other projects of similar nature, size, and complexity that are believed to be particularly relevant to the Sumner County project of advising clients on compliance with grants, governmental accounting, financial policy, and auditing experience.
 - Demonstration of knowledge and expertise related to eligibility and authorized uses of funds from the CARES Act and/or American Rescue Plan Act.
 - Past experience working with and coordinating efforts between state and federal agencies and local government regarding financial grants and subrecipients contracting/compliance.
 - Demonstration of experience in the acceptance, expensing, and recording of grant funds and reporting.
8. **Current Workload Section** – List current projects, stage of completion, and percentage of time to be allocated to those projects. Also, include upcoming committed projects.
9. **References** – Provide names, addresses, telephone numbers, email or other contact information for at least five (5) references. Provide the project name(s) and services provided for each reference.
10. **Insurance** – Documentation of firm's professional liability insurance policy, general liability insurance, automobile liability insurance, employers' liability insurance, professional liability insurance, errors and omissions insurance.
11. **Litigation** – Provide a list of any pending or concluded litigation against the applicant firm(s) within the previous five years.
12. **Additional Information** – Provide any additional information you feel is needed to describe your qualifications for this Project.

CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSES

Properly identified responses received on time, and in accordance with the requirements of the RFQ, will be considered for award. Responses not received on time, or otherwise not submitted in accordance with the requirements of the RFQ, will not receive consideration for award.

After all responses have been evaluated, the County may negotiate with the firm that submits the most qualified proposal, in the County's sole and absolute discretion. The County reserves the right to select the successful respondent once all proposals are received and firms are short listed and interviewed, without seeking further information for clarification from respondents. The County may elect to interview the firm and have presented with oral presentation or clarifications submitted in writing. The County will select the consultant(s) which it believes is the best fit based on a combination of the original responses, references, oral presentations, and other relevant factors, etc.

The selected respondent and the County will jointly work on developing the Scope of Services for the Project, detailing all of the needed services and assigned hours. Negotiations will be conducted with one firm at a time and only if an agreeable cost cannot be reached, will the next firm be contacted. The fee schedule (compensation for services) submitted prior to interviews, or the fee negotiated with the County will be used.

Final Selection: At this time, the County, at its discretion, may reject all submittals or may negotiate an agreement for services. It is anticipated that the County will negotiate a Stipulated Sum contract with the consultant. If, in the County's opinion, it is not possible to successfully complete negotiations with the first-ranked firm, the County may, at its sole discretion, elect to terminate those negotiations and proceed with the second-ranked firm, and so on. It is the intent of the County to enter into a contract with the Consultant for the consulting services within thirty (30) days of selection.

Rejection of Responses: The County shall have the right to reject any or all responses for any reason at any time, reject a response not accompanied by the information required by the RFQ, or reject a response which is in any way incomplete or irregular, with no liability for cost(s) incurred. Nothing contained in the RFQ shall create any legal right in favor of any respondent or create any liability or obligation on the part of Sumner County.

RFQ SCHEDULE		
Date	Time	Description
September 16, 2021	-----	Advertise in Paper & Release RFQ to County website
September 30, 2021	2:00 PM local time	Deadline for Written Questions
October 1, 2021	5:00 PM local time	County Responses <i>(Not Later Than)</i>
October 14, 2021	10:00 AM local time	Submittals Due

The dates shown above may be subject to change within the Sumner County sole discretion and upon written notification as set forth herein.

END OF REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS