Request for Proposal
Consumer Survey Services
for
Washington Health Benefit Exchange

HBE 14-005

Released by
Washington Health Benefit Exchange
810 Jefferson Street SE
P.O. Box 657
Olympia, Washington 98507

RFP RELEASE DATE: **June 5, 2014**

RESPONSES DUE: **June 27, 2014, 3:00 p.m. PST (electronically *received*)**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Title – Consumer Survey Services For Health Benefit Exchange

The Washington Health Benefit Exchange (HBE or Exchange) is initiating this Request for Proposals (RFP) to solicit proposals from qualified Vendors (hereafter called the Vendor) to develop and perform Consumer Survey Services. The Vendor will need to provide the Exchange with survey results by September 12, 2014, provide a technical report on transitioning the survey to the Exchange by November 14, 2014, and present the survey results to the Exchange Board. The HBE will award one contract to the responding firm most capable of providing the Exchange the Consumer Survey Services for a price equivalent to or under $450,000. The Vendor that meets all RFP mandatory requirements and receives the highest score in the evaluation (Section 6) will be selected as an Apparently Successful Vendor.

1.2. HBE Background

The Exchange is a health insurance marketplace where consumers may enroll in individual or small-employer group coverage. The Exchange is also the marketplace where newly eligible adults may enroll in Washington Apple Health Medicaid coverage and where families renew their coverage in Washington Apple Health. The Healthplanfinder system provides all consumers with online access to the Exchange's marketplace. The marketplace also provides in-person assistance made available statewide by the Exchange's Customer Service Center (call center), agents and brokers, certified assistors, and community partners.

The Exchange completed its initial open enrollment period on March 31, 2014 by enrolling over 1 million individuals through Healthplanfinder. The enrollment includes roughly 150,000 subsidized or non-subsidized enrollees in qualified health plans (QHPs). About 300,000 individuals were enrolled in Washington Apple Health through an expanded Medicaid program for newly-eligible adults and another 150,000 individuals enrolled in Medicaid programs available before passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). About 400,000 individuals renewed their Medicaid coverage in Washington Apple Health during the initial 6-month open enrollment period and Healthplanfinder operates year-around as the portal for monthly Medicaid renewals.

For further information on HBE, please use the following link: http://wahbexchange.org/about-us/what-exchange/

1.3. Solicitation

The Exchange is soliciting a Vendor to perform a consumer survey. The primary purpose of the consumer survey is to collect information that will assist the Exchange in evaluating and improving its performance. The results of the survey will inform the Exchange Board, Washington State health care leaders, and staff with metrics on the launch and initial open enrollment period from the perspective of the consumers.

The Vendor will need broad technical and management skill to perform all aspects of the survey. The Vendor will need to establish technical processes in support of the survey, develop the survey instrument, perform the survey, prepare reports and provide presentations, and supply data on the survey responses to the Exchange.

The technical processes will likely include assessing sample sizes and stratifying data to identify population demographics and select a survey population and produce response rates that will generate valid results. The processes will also likely include weighting the data from survey responses, or other acceptable statistical techniques, to achieve representative, valid results. The Vendor will also need to capture, store, and supply the raw survey data to the Exchange.

The project also requires assistance from the Vendor in transitioning the performance of the survey to the Exchange in subsequent years. Beginning in 2015, federal grants will no longer be available to fund the day-to-day operations of the Exchange and the Exchange will be self-sustaining. As a result, the Exchange needs to establish an efficient process to routinely perform the consumer survey.

In performing the survey, the Vendor will need to collaborate with Exchange staff and external stakeholders. The Vendor will need to manage the activities of its team so that the consumer survey may be developed and implemented within a tight timeframe. The Vendor will need to provide briefings to Exchange staff and prepare recommendations and reports in support of completing the survey in a timely fashion while achieving valid results. The Vendor will work with a variety of stakeholders throughout the project, primarily while developing the survey instrument and when providing briefings or presentations on updates or results. In collaboration with Exchange staff, the Vendor will likely lead discussions and may provide briefings or presentations to the Board of the Exchange, the Board's Policy and Operations Committees, the Exchange Advisory Committee, or other key external stakeholders.

1.4. Statement of Work

A qualified Vendor will perform, at a minimum, these tasks in developing and implementing a consumer survey for the Exchange.

1.4.1. Establish processes

The processes necessary to perform a comprehensive consumer survey need to be established. The Vendor will need to partner with the Exchange to develop and target the results that best measure the performance of the Exchange from the perspective of the consumers. The task will involve working with the Exchange staff to specify the results to be produced from the consumer survey. The Vendor will likely need to specify results for the entire enrolled population as well as for each sub-population. The Vendor will need to capture responses through the survey that achieve the results specified at the beginning of the project.

1.4.1.1. Sampling

The Vendor will likely need to develop mechanisms for sampling consumers by the different markets offered through Healthplanfinder. The sampling techniques will likely involve the ability to stratify the enrolled population to capture subpopulations of QHP and Medicaid consumers. For example, QHP enrollees are predominantly covered through the individual insurance market; currently, few individuals are enrolled through the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP). Most of the enrollees in the individual market purchased a QHP with the assistance of federal subsidies in the form of health insurance premium tax credits or cost-sharing reductions. Other enrollees paid the full cost of an individual QHP purchased through the Exchange. The survey will also need to collect information from three populations enrolled through Medicaid managed care plans: Individuals renewing Medicaid coverage, individuals who were previously eligible but not enrolled, and newly-eligible low-income adults enrolled through expanded Medicaid. The Vendor will need to stratify and sample these populations in ways that collect responses that support the results identified for the Exchange.

1.4.1.2. Demographics

The Vendor will need to suggest, develop, and implement various statistical methods or techniques to capture certain demographics across the population and within subpopulations. The Exchange collects demographic data through the enrollment process and the [Health Coverage Enrollment Report, October 1, 2013—March 31, 2014] displays the characteristics of individuals who enrolled through the Exchange. The Vendor will need to consider the specified results of the project and apply the demographics and characteristics of the enrolled population to determine how to best sample and survey the populations necessary to produce the results. For example, the initial open enrollment period was much longer than a usual employer-sponsored period. Because of the length of the initial open enrollment period, the Exchange would like to attempt to examine differences in consumer experiences across the six-month period. The Vendor will need to suggest feasible stratification and survey methods that could appropriately test for differences in consumer experiences across the six-month period.

1.4.1.3. SHOP, pediatric dental, and applicants who did not enroll

The Exchange also enrolled two other smaller populations: small-employer groups through the Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP) and children through qualified pediatric dental plans. Each population needs to be examined to determine if it may be appropriately surveyed. Healthplanfinder Business, the Exchange's SHOP marketplace, is available in only Clark and Cowlitz counties. Over 4,700 businesses throughout the state, however, created accounts in Healthplanfinder Business and are likely located in counties not yet served by Healthplanfinder Business. The Vendor will need to explore strategic themes among small employers that help the Exchange examine, for example, the willingness of small employers to offer health insurance coverage in the future and if they perceive value from purchasing SHOP plans through Healthplanfinder Business. Medicaid offers dental benefits to most, but not all, low-income children in Washington State. Qualified dental plans offered through the Exchange, consequently, now cover dental benefits for over 6,500 children. The Vendor will need to evaluate potential methods of effectively collecting information on the consumer experience of small businesses covered through Healthplanfinder Business and families with children covered through pediatric dental plans.

The Exchange needs to learn from people who did not enroll during the initial open enrollment period. Some individuals began an application but did not complete the enrollment process by selecting and purchasing a QHP. The Vendor will need to develop options for surveying these applicants or collecting useful responses from them in some other fashion that permits the Exchange to learn why they did not enroll.

1.4.1.4. Survey methodology

The Vendor must be able to develop, recommend, and implement the appropriate survey methodology for the consumer survey. The Vendor will need to assist the Exchange in prioritizing topics to be surveyed and in developing applicable questions. The Vendor may need to employ techniques that reach multiple cultures or populations that may not speak English. The Vendor must have the expertise to develop and recommend a survey of appropriate length and time and the expertise to assess the most appropriate survey method or combination of survey methods, e.g., phone, paper, or electronic, for this project. The Vendor will also need to assist the Exchange in assessing, formulating, recommending, and calculating acceptable response rates for the population and subpopulations. The Vendor will likely need to recommend how to weight the survey responses or suggest other statistical techniques that may produce valid and meaningful results. If statistical techniques must be employed, then the Vendor must have the expertise and ability to weight the survey responses or implement other appropriate statistical methodologies that achieve valid and meaningful results.

1.4.2. Developing the survey instrument

Consumer responses on the first open enrollment period need to be collected and the Exchange needs to use the survey instrument, or a modified version of it, to routinely collect and compare consumer experiences over time. The Exchange Board will review and comment on the survey instrument and the instrument will need to collect responses from consumers across a broad set of topics. The following topics will likely be discussed in the development of the survey instrument:

Outreach and Marketing: The Exchange developed and implemented a widespread outreach and marketing campaign. The campaign likely contributed to our extensive enrollment and customer service activity. To help enhance or develop future marketing efforts, the Vendor needs to collect information on the effectiveness of different forms of outreach and communication. The Exchange has performed an initial review of our outreach and marketing efforts and any information collected through the consumer survey is not intended to duplicate the analysis performed in the initial review.

Enrollee information at the time of enrollment: Demographic characteristics associated with the enrollment process were collected from applicants as a function of the initial open enrollment period. Some demographic information, however, about households was not collected and so additional household characteristics need to be identified, examined, and surveyed. The Exchange will want to consider, for example, collecting information about:

- Insurance status at the time of enrollment.
- The need for health care services.
- The availability of regular access to care.
- The affordability of health care services or coverage.
- Employment characteristics.

Shopping experience during initial enrollment: The online marketplace played a central role in offering coverage and the Vendor needs to explore the overall consumer shopping experience through Healthplanfinder. The Vendor needs to explore the best options for collecting information that permits the Exchange to examine if access to Healthplanfinder or a consumer's overall shopping experience varied by culture or language.

The Exchange also used many forms of communication and needs information about their effectiveness. For example, the Exchange sent notifications and letters directly to enrollees about their eligibility, options, and selections. Also, extensive on-screen communication was embedded in Healthplanfinder with the intent of helping consumers navigate the enrollment process. Social media and other electronic communication were used to reach specific consumers or broad audiences with similar needs. The survey instrument needs to capture information about the effectiveness of different forms of communication among audiences with varying communication needs.

Direct customer service: Different forms of direct customer service were provided to consumers during the initial open enrollment period. Agents and brokers, certified assistors, and community partners provided direct assistance to consumers throughout the initial open enrollment period. The Customer Service Center fielded calls directly from consumers and specialists at the Exchange resolved difficult cases. The Exchange needs information collected about the expectations and overall experience of consumers who received direct customer service. The Vendor should attempt to collect the responses so that the Exchange may determine where certain types of direct customer service excel.

Plan selection: The Vendor needs to collect information about the factors that went into selecting a QHP on the Exchange; Washington Apple Health enrollees do not select a plan. Primarily, information is needed to determine if the offering of QHPs met the expectations of the consumers. For example, did Healthplanfinder offer enough plans to choose from? Were benefits and costs displayed in helpful formats? Could applicants "shop by doctor?" Why was the plan selected? Were premiums and overall health care costs perceived as affordable?

Post enrollment: The Vendor needs to collect information about consumer experiences with Healthplanfinder after open enrollment - consumers' experience in managing an account, paying premiums, receiving responses to questions, and potentially qualifying for a special enrollment period. The Vendor will need to develop appropriate ways to collect information about an enrollee's experience with his or her carrier or experience with the delivery of health care services.

Consumer advice: The Vendor needs to provide advice and assistance in capturing comments from our consumers about our performance in the initial open enrollment period. This could be an opportunity for a consumer to provide general advice or recommend specific enhancements or improvements. Capturing advice from those that did not complete the enrollment process could be highly valuable. The Vendor will need to attempt to discover if consumers will continue to use Healthplanfinder or would recommend purchasing through Healthplanfinder to others.

Discussion of these and other topics raised by the Exchange Board and stakeholders will contribute to the development of the survey instrument.

1.4.3. Conducting the survey

The Vendor will need to conduct the survey and manage all aspects of using the survey instrument to collect accurate and valid information and achieve a response rate that supports reliable results.

The Vendor will need to prepare all communication for Exchange consumers necessary to perform the survey. Communication prepared by the Vendor will involve, at a minimum, notifying consumers about the survey and providing communication to potential respondents in a professional, timely, and appropriate fashion. The Vendor may need to prepare different variations or forms of communication for the different subpopulations to be surveyed. Professional and respectful communication with consumers is highly valued by the Exchange, and the Vendor will need to work closely with the Exchange on all aspects of communicating with consumers about the survey. All consumer communications prepared by the Vendor to perform the survey must be approved by the Exchange.

A sufficient response rate will need to be achieved for the survey to be successful. The Vendor will need to advise the Exchange in determining applicable methods of calculating and achieving a sufficient response rate for the survey, which may necessitate achieving a sufficient response rate by different categories of consumers or subpopulations.

1.4.4. Presentation and data

The Vendor will prepare a presentation that organizes and presents the survey results and briefly summarizes how the survey project was performed. The Vendor will organize the presentation to highlight important results and use graphics and communication techniques that best present the consumer responses collected through the survey. The

Vendor must prepare the presentation to be suitable for the Exchange Board, the primary audience. The presentation will be prepared so that it may be, without difficulty, shortened for brief presentations to the Board or other audiences with knowledge of the Exchange similar to the Board's. The Vendor will need to be available, if invited by the Exchange, to participate with Exchange staff in presenting the survey results as soon as the results are available and can be reasonably prepared in a presentation. The presentation will be held at a Board meeting or other public venue. The Vendor will be available for additional presentations at a date, time, location/teleconference/webinar, and compensation agreed upon by the Exchange and Vendor.

The Vendor will supply the Exchange with the raw survey data from the consumer responses. The Vendor will use a standard electronic format specified by the Exchange when submitting the survey data to the Exchange.

1.4.5. Transitioning the survey

The Vendor will prepare a report on the technical functions of performing the initial consumer survey and the internal capacity of the Exchange to transition to self-maintenance of the consumer survey. The report will sufficiently summarize the technical aspects of performing the initial Customer Survey Services for the Exchange and to right-size the survey, which will include, at a minimum, collecting, comparing, and analyzing meaningful data over time and within reasonable resources to the Exchange. The report will also include an action plan that guides and advises the Exchange on the best approaches or options for developing the necessary internal capacity to perform the consumer survey. The action plan will be a guide that assists the Exchange to prepare and implement the internal functions necessary to maintain and routinely perform the consumer survey with limited or no Vendor assistance on an ongoing basis beginning next year. Upon completion of the report, the Vendor will be available to provide a briefing and discussion with Exchange staff on key aspects of implementing the consumer survey in the next year and on an on-going basis.

1.5. Period of Performance

The initial period of performance of the Contract resulting from this RFP is tentatively scheduled to begin on or about July 22, 2014 and end on June 30, 2015. At HBE's sole discretion, the contract may be amended and extended for up to three (3) additional years, in whatever time increments HBE deems appropriate.

1.6. Acquisition Authority

The Washington Health Benefit Exchange issues this Request for Proposal acting under the authority pursuant to CH. 43.71 RCW. CH. 43.71 RCW is the statute that establishes the Exchange and the Exchange Board.

1.7 RFP Schedule

This RFP is being issued under the following Schedule. Required Response deadlines are mandatory and non-negotiable. Failure to meet any of the required deadlines (dates and times) will result in disqualification from participation. The schedule outlines the process for important action dates and times. HBE reserves the right to revise this schedule at any time.

Item	Action	Date
1	Exchange issues RFP.	6/05/2014
2.1	Vendors submit questions to the RFP Coordinator prior to teleconference/webinar by 3:00 p.m. PST. Submitting questions in advance is a courtesy. Vendors may ask any question during the teleconference/webinar.	6/16/2014
2.2	Vendor Teleconference/Webinar 9:00 a.m.—10:30 a.m. PST. Conference line and passcode: 1.866.244.8528; 402035. Webinar: https://securemeeting.globalmeet.com/w/pub/entry?hcid=2040778&sc=6086&pc=402035&role=0&loc=EN	6/17/2014
3	Vendors may submit written questions until 3:00 p.m. PST.	6/18/2014
4	Exchange will issue final responses to Vendor questions in an addendum by close of business.	6/20/2014
5	Vendor Letter of Intent. Submitting the letter of intent is a courtesy to the Exchange.	6/20/2014
6	**Vendors must submit responses to RFP Coordinator by 3:00 p.m. PST.**	**6/27/2014**
7.1	Exchange evaluation of responses.	6/30/ to 7/03/2014
7.2	Target date for oral presentations should the Exchange opt to hold oral presentations.	7/07/ to 7/08/2014
8	Exchange notifies Apparently Successful Vendor (ASV) and begins contract negotiations. Non-ASV's may request a debriefing.	7/09/2014
9	Target date for contract execution.	7/22/2014

2. ADMINISTRATION/GENERAL INFORMATION

2.1. COMMUNICATION THROUGH RFP COORDINATOR

Upon release of this RFP, all Vendor communications concerning this solicitation must be directed to the RFP Coordinator listed below. If the Vendor communicates with any other employees of the Washington Health Benefit Exchange concerning this RFP, unless such communication is otherwise required or allowed by law or written HBE policy, HBE may disqualify the Vendor from responding to this RFP.

John Flanagan
Washington Health Benefit Exchange
HBE Contracts Office
RE: HBE14-005
Email: contracts@WAHBExchange.org

Reponses should be based on the material contained in the RFP, any related amendments/addenda, and any questions and written answers directed through the RFP Coordinator. All oral communications will be considered unofficial and non-binding on the HBE. Vendors should rely only on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator or his designee.

2.2. OPTIONAL LETTER OF INTENT

Vendors are encouraged to submit by email an optional Letter of Intent to respond to RFP-14-005. Failure to submit a Letter of Intent will not disqualify the Vendor's organization from further participation in the RFP; however, it will assure that the Vendor's firm will promptly receive all addenda and announcements concerning the acquisition. The Letter of Intent should:

1) State that the Vendor wishes to respond to RFP-14-005
2) Include the Vendor's mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.

Email the Letter of Intent to:

John Flanagan
RFP Coordinator
Health Benefit Exchange
RE: HBE14-005
Email: contracts@wahbexchange.org

The Letter of Intent should be received on the date stated in Section 1.7; Schedule.

2.3. VENDORS' QUESTIONS AND HBE ANSWERS

Vendor questions regarding this RFP will be accepted until the dates and times specified in RFP Section 1.7: *RFP Schedule*. Early submission of questions is encouraged. Vendor questions must be submitted in writing via e-mail to the RFP Coordinator at the email address listed below.

John Flanagan
Washington Health Benefit Exchange
HBE Contracts Office
RE: HBE14-005
Email: contracts@WAHBExchange.org

HBE’s official written answers to the Vendor’s questions will be posted to Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) website at https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/ Please check WEBS regularly for updates, amendments and other RFP addenda.

The Vendor that submitted the questions will not be identified. Verbal responses to questions will be non-binding on the HBE. Only written responses posted to WEBS and the HBE’s Procurement Web Site will be considered official and binding.

Vendors are requested to use the following format when submitting their written questions:

Question #	Document Name	Section # and Title	Page or Paragraph#	Question

2.4. VENDOR CONFERENCE

A Vendor Conference will be conducted by webinar on the date outlined in Section 1.7 - RFP Schedule. Attending the Vendor Conference is optional. Prospective Vendors may submit written questions prior to and following the Vendor Conference. Prospective Vendors may also ask questions during the Vendor Conference. Verbal responses to questions are unofficial and non-binding. Written responses to Vendor questions will be posted on Washington’s Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) system. The name of the Entity that submitted a question will not be identified. Only written responses posted to the WEBS are to be considered official and binding.

2.5. E-MAIL

E-mail is to be used for all communications required in this RFP. HBE may also communicate with the Vendor utilizing the same methods. HBE will also post any formal communications to WEBS.

HBE does not take responsibility for any problems in the e-mail or Internet delivery services, either within or outside HBE. The Vendor is responsible for ensuring timely and complete delivery of any communications related to this RFP.

2.6. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION/PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

The HBE is subject to Washington State’s Public Records Act (Chapter 42.56 RCW). Vendor’s Response can be disclosed through the process set forth in this section. Portions of a Vendor’s Response may be protected from disclosure through the process set forth in this section.

A Vendor cannot restrict its entire Response or entire sections of the Response from disclosure. A Vendor also cannot restrict its pricing from disclosure. Attempts to restrict disclosure using footer on every page to restrict disclosure will not be honored and may require the Vendor to resubmit the Response or subject the Vendor to disqualification.

If the Vendor wants to protect any Proprietary Information that is included in its Response from disclosure, the information shall be clearly designated by the Vendor as Proprietary Information. “Proprietary Information” is defined as information owned by Vendor to which Vendor claims a protectable interest under law. Propriety Information may include, but is not limited to, information protected by copyright, patent, trademark, or trade secret laws.

To the extent consistent with Chapter 42.56 RCW, the Public Records Act, the HBE shall maintain the confidentiality of Vendor’s information marked Proprietary Information. If a public disclosure request is made to view Vendor’s Proprietary Information, the HBE shall notify Vendor of the request and of the date that the Proprietary Information shall be released to the requester unless Vendor obtains a court order enjoining that disclosure. If Vendor fails to obtain a court order enjoining disclosure, the HBE will release the Proprietary Information on the specified date.

The HBE's sole responsibility shall be limited to maintaining the Vendor's identified Proprietary Information in a secure area and to notify Vendor of any request(s) for disclosure for so long as the HBE retains Vendor's information in the HBE records. Failure to label materials as Proprietary Information or failure to timely respond after notice of a public disclosure request has been given shall be deemed a waiver by Vendor of any claim that such materials are exempt from disclosure.

All requests for information should be directed to the RFP Coordinator.

2.7. COSTS OF RESPONSE PREPARATION

HBE will not pay any Vendor costs associated with preparing or presenting any Response in response to this RFP.

2.8. RESPONSE PROPERTY OF THE HBE

All materials submitted in response to this solicitation become the property of the HBE, unless received after the deadline in which case the Response is returned to the sender. The HBE has the right to use any of the ideas presented in any material offered. Selection or rejection of a Response does not affect this right.

2.9. WAIVER OF MINOR IRREGULARITIES

Read all instructions carefully. If the Vendor does not comply with any part of this RFP, HBE may, at its sole option, reject the Vendor's Response as non-responsive. HBE reserves the right to waive minor irregularities contained in any Response.

2.10. ERRORS IN RESPONSE

Vendors are liable for all errors or omissions contained in their Responses. Vendors will not be allowed to alter Response documents after the deadline for Response submission. The HBE is not liable for any errors in Responses. The HBE reserves the right to contact Vendor for clarification of Response contents. HBE reserves the right to correct minor obvious error contained in any Response.

In those cases where it is unclear to what extent a requirement or price has been addressed, the evaluation team(s) may, at their discretion and acting through the RFP Coordinator, contact a Vendor to clarify specific points in the submitted Response. However, under no circumstances will the responding Vendor be allowed to make changes to the proposed items after the deadline stated for receipt of Responses

2.11. RFP AMENDMENTS

HBE reserves the right to amend this RFP. Amendments and all communications regarding this RFP will be posted to the Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) website at https://fortress.wa.gov/ga/webs/

If a conflict exists between amendments, or between an amendment and the RFP, the document issued last shall take precedence. The published Vendors' questions and HBE's official answers are an amendment to the RFP.

2.12. WITHDRAWAL OF RESPONSE

Vendors may withdraw a Response that has been submitted at any time up to the Response due date and time (identified in Section 2: *Schedule*). To accomplish Response withdrawal, a written request signed by an authorized representative of Vendor must be submitted to the RFP Coordinator. After withdrawing a previously submitted Response, Vendor may submit another Response at any time up to the Response submission due date and time.

2.13. RIGHT TO CANCEL

With respect to all or part of this RFP, the HBE reserves the right to cancel or reissue at any time without obligation or liability.

2.14. RIGHT TO REJECT ALL RESPONSES

HBE may, at any time and at its sole discretion and without penalty, reject any and all Responses and issue no contract as a result of this RFP.

2.15. AUTHORITY TO BIND HBE

The HBE Chief Executive Officer and the HBE Chief Executive Officer's designees are the only persons who may legally commit HBE to any contracts. The Vendor shall not incur, and HBE shall not pay, any costs incurred before a Contract is fully executed.

2.16. CONTRACT

HBE will award one Contract to the Vendor most capable of providing professional internal audit personnel with the experience and expertise required. The Apparently Successful Vendor will be expected to sign a Contract which is substantially the same as the Contract included in this RFP as Exhibit C. The Contract will also incorporate this RFP and the Vendor's Response.

Either party may propose additional Contract terms and conditions during negotiation of the final Contract. However, as stated in 3.1.1.9 of this RFP, proposed language alternate to the attached Sample Contract must be included in the Vendor's Letter of Transmittal. The Vendor may not substitute their own contract for the HBE Contract.

Tentatively, the period of performance of the Contract(s) resulting from this RFP is July 22, 2014, (or date of execution, whichever is later), through June 30, 2015. At HBE's sole discretion, this Contract may be extended via amendment for up to three (3) additional years, in whatever time increments HBE deems appropriate.

If the Apparently Successful Vendor(s) refuses to sign the final Contract within ten (10) calendar days of delivery, HBE may revoke the award and award the Contract to the next-highest-ranked Vendor(s), or not make an alternate award.

3. INSTRUCTIONS; VENDOR RESPONSE

Vendors must follow these instructions exactly or their Response may be deemed non-responsive.

3.1. RESPONSE CONTENTS

Responses should contain, in the order given:

3.1.1. Letter of Transmittal (MANDATORY)

A Letter of Transmittal should be prepared on Vendor letterhead and signed by an individual who is authorized to commit the Vendor to the services and requirements as stated in this RFP. The Letter of Transmittal must be submitted as a separate document and include, in the order given:

3.1.1.1. Identifying information about the Vendor to include the following:

a. The Vendor's business name, address, telephone number, email address (if any) and fax number.
b. The legal status of the bidding entity (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, etc.) and the year the entity was organized as it now substantially exists.
c. The name, address, email address and telephone number of any sole proprietor, and of the partners or principal officers as appropriate.
d. The name of the person who will have primary contact with the Health Benefit Exchange in carrying out the responsibilities of this Contract.
e. The name(s) and titles of all persons authorized to speak on behalf of the Vendor on matters related to this procurement.
f. The name and address of the entity that receives legal notices for the Vendor.

3.1.1.2. If Response is being submitted in partnership with one or more entities, identify the entities and their primary responsibilities if selected as the Apparently Successful Vendor. Provide brief description of the relationship with the Vendor and the process for determining which entity will perform the work.

3.1.1.3. Provide a statement affirming that by submitting a response to this solicitation, the Vendor and its key subcontractors represent that they are not in arrears in the payment of any obligations due and owing the State of Washington, including the payment of taxes and employee benefits, and that it shall not become in arrears during the term of the Contract if selected for Contract award.

3.1.1.4. The Vendor's Washington Uniform Business Identification (UBI) number. The Vendor must be licensed to do business in the state of Washington before any resulting Contract is executed. Provide the Vendor organization's UBI number issued by the Washington State Department of Licensing or an affirmation that the organization will obtain a business license before executing a Contract.

3.1.1.5. State Vendor's Federal Employer Tax Identification Number. If Vendor is a sole proprietor, they may use the following format when submitting the Federal ID number: xxx-xx-1234. For the "1234", please use the last 4-digits of Vendor's social security number. If the Vendor is selected as a successful Vendor, HBE will send a W-9 to obtain the complete Federal ID/SSN number.

3.1.1.6. Conflict of Interest information:

a. If any of the Vendor's employees or officers or subcontractors employees or officers were employed by the Washington Health Benefit Exchange or the state of Washington during the last two years, state their positions within the organization, state their proposed duties under any resulting Contract, their duties and position during their employment with HBE or the state, and the date of their termination from HBE/state employment.
b. If any owner, key officer or key employee of the Vendor is related by blood or marriage to any employee of HBE or has a close personal relationship to same, identify all the parties, identify their current or proposed positions and describe the nature of the relationship.
c. Vendor must disclose if they have a business relationship with Deloitte Consulting, or other major HBE Contractor
d. If the Vendor is aware of any other real or potential conflict of interest, the Vendor must fully disclose the nature and circumstances of such potential conflict of interest. If, after review of the information provided and the situation, HBE determines that a potential conflict of interest exists, HBE may, at its sole option, disqualify the Vendor from participating in this procurement. Failure to fully disclose any real or potential conflict of interest may result in the disqualification of the Vendor or the Termination for Default of any contract with the Vendor resulting from this procurement with the Vendor.

3.1.1.7. Vendors must indicate whether they have had a contract terminated for default in the last five years. Termination for default is defined as a notice to stop work due to the Vendor's nonperformance or poor performance, where the issue of performance was either not litigated due to inaction on the part of the Vendor, or litigated and determined that the Vendor was in default.

If the Vendor has had a contract terminated for default in the last five years, the Vendor must submit full details including the other party's name, address and telephone number. The Vendor must specifically grant HBE permission to contact any and all involved parties and access any and all information HBE determines is necessary to satisfy its investigation of the termination. HBE will evaluate the circumstances of the termination and may at its sole discretion, bar the participation of the Vendor in this procurement.

3.1.1.8. The page numbers and names of any Response elements being claimed as "Proprietary" or "Confidential" (see Section 2.6). Include an explanation for each claim of confidentiality.

3.1.1.9. Any alternate contract language the Vendor wishes to propose (see section 2.16). If alternate contract language is longer than one page, attach it to your Letter of Submittal as a separate document.

3.1.1.10. A list of all RFP amendments received by amendment issue date. If no RFP amendments were received, write a statement to that effect. Vendor questions/ HBE responses are considered an amendment to the RFP.

3.1.1.11. A detailed list of all materials and enclosures being sent in the Response.

3.1.2. Certifications and Assurances (MANDATORY)

Certifications and Assurances (Exhibit A) signed by a person authorized to bind the Vendor to a contract.

3.1.3. Vendor's Response to RFP HBE 14-005 (MANDATORY)

3.2. RESPONSE FORMAT (MANDATORY)

a. The Letter of Transmittal and responses are to be submitted via email in unrestricted Word, Excel or "Pdf" format.
b. State responding organization's name on the first page of all RFP responses.
c. Pages are to be formatted as standard 8.5" x 11" white paper. Font size can be no less that 11 point. Margins can be no less than 1 inch. Each page must be numbered.
d. Figures and tables must be numbered and referenced in the text of the Response by that number. Foldouts containing charts, spreadsheets, and oversize exhibits are permissible.
e. The Response, as well as any reference materials presented by Vendor, must be written in English and Vendor must provide all rates in United States dollars.
f. Write the RFP response in the order given in Exhibit B. Title and number each item in the same way it appears instructions. The Vendor must respond to every element, except where otherwise stated.
g. Some elements may have page limitations that will be enforced.

3.3. DELIVERY OF RESPONSES (MANDATORY)

Email Response(s) to:

RFP Coordinator
John Flanagan
Washington Health Benefit Exchange
HBE Contracts Office
RE: HBE14-005
Email: contracts@WAHBExchange.org

The Response must arrive at the HBE, to the RFP Coordinator, no later than 3:00pm, PST, on the Response Due Date stated in the RFP SCHEDULE.

Late Responses will not be accepted and will automatically be disqualified from further consideration.

HBE does not take responsibility for any problems in the email delivery services. The responding Vendor is responsible for ensuring delivery in accordance with the specifications in this RFP. Transmission of the Response to any other email address is not equivalent to receipt by HBE.

4. VENDOR REQUIREMENTS/QUALIFICATIONS

4.1. Vendor's proposed solution

Provide a proposed solution for performing the consumer survey services. The solution must be presented in the form of a high-level work plan. The work plan must present the basic steps the Vendor would take to formulate a solution for sections 1.4.1—1.4.4. The Vendor must also define the proposed solution in sections 1.4.1—1.4.4 in the form of deliverables and their associated costs. In the response to this section, the Vendor should assume that work will begin July 22, 2014 and conclude by September 12, 2014. The Exchange, however, will consider a work plan that concludes the work in these sections at a later date that is supported by the Vendor's expertise.

Scores for this section will be based upon:

- The description of the deliverables to form a proposed solution to the work in sections 1.4.1—1.4.4. (The Vendor will respond separately to section 1.4.5, transitioning the survey, below.)
- The use of statistical methods or other expertise to develop a proposed solution that examines the performance of the Exchange among various subpopulations and demographics of the survey population.
- Using, or capturing and using, demographic information to develop a proposed solution that represents the perspective of consumers.
- The approach to developing a survey instrument or other tools for multiple subpopulations that collects information on several consumer topics.
- The proposed approach to conducting the survey so that valid results are collected across subpopulations, topics, and key demographics.
- Clarity and feasibleness of the proposed work plan: the effective and efficient use of time and resources to formulate valid results by the due date, and the coordination of key tasks and their dependencies.
- Any imaginative or innovative methods proposed for performing the consumer survey services that will generate valid results about the Exchange's performance from the perspective of consumers.

The Vendor's response to this section may be no more than ten pages.

4.2. Managerial qualifications

Provide examples of two consumer surveys performed within the last four years using the following format:

Name of the engagement: Name.

When: The time period of the engagement, for example, January through July, 2013.

Description: Briefly describe the engagement. Provide sample size, response rate, and method of calculating the response. Note if the survey was performed in the health care arena, and also note if the survey was related to the ACA.

Leaders: Provide the names and titles of your project sponsor and project manager. Provide a brief summary of the roles each played in the engagement.

Management and guidance: Describe how your firm managed the engagement. Highlight how the engagement was organized to enhance timely completion of quality work. Describe how the engagement set the scope of the project and your firm's role in establishing and managing the scope. Describe any external stakeholders involved in the project and your firm's role in working with them or advising the client on stakeholder issues. Describe how your firm organized the project to manage risk and respond to unknown events.

Challenge: Briefly describe one key challenge and how your firm played a role in resolving the challenge. Briefly describe the outcome or resolution.

Scores for this section will be based upon experience or expertise in these areas:

- Managerial skills and organizational ability to guide the consumer survey project.
- Communication methods with the client.
- The ability to successfully work with external stakeholders.
- Experience performing a consumer survey within the health care arena and the ACA, if any.
- Identifying, escalating, and resolving problems.
- Managing risks and responding to unknown barriers and opportunities.
- Setting and managing scope, and prioritizing and defining tasks to deliver on project expectations and due dates.

The Vendor's response to this section may be no more than four pages.

4.3. Qualifications of Vendor's proposed team

Provide your proposed team to perform all aspects of the consumer survey in sections 1.4.1—1.4.4. An organizational chart with team member names and titles for the project must be provided. Provide the team's expertise in the following format:

Developing survey processes

List key team members and titles performing this work:

Expertise and experience performing this work:

Developing survey instrument

List key team members and titles performing this work:

Expertise and experience performing this work:

Conducting the survey instrument

List key team members and titles performing this work:

Expertise and experience performing this work:

Presentation and data

List key team members and titles performing this work:

Expertise and experience performing this work:

Vendors that do not demonstrate expertise in every section 1.4.1—1.4.4 will be disqualified. Scores for this section will be based upon the overall strength of the team in performing the survey described in these sections:

- Expertise in developing survey processes in section 1.4.1.
- Expertise in developing the survey instrument in section 1.4.2.

- Expertise in conducting the survey instrument in section 1.4.3.
- Expertise in presentation and data in section 1.4.4.

The Vendor’s response may be no more than four pages.

4.4. Transitioning the survey

Provide the general approach or processes for developing the transition report in section 1.4.5. Identify key staff or resources that will be brought to bear in the development of the transition report.

The Vendor’s response to this section may be no more than two pages.

Scores for this section will be based upon:

- Experience and expertise of the staff to provide transitioning services.
- Likelihood of the proposed solution to transition the consumer survey to the Exchange in 2015.
- The proposed approach to identify and estimate general costs to perform the survey in a typical year.

5. COST RESPONSE

5.1. COST OF CONSUMER SURVEY SERVICES

The total cost bid by each Vendor will be normalized with the low-cost bidder and that percentage will be applied to a Vendor's score to produce a final score.

Use the format below to bid the project based upon the deliverables presented in the response to section 4.1, Vendor's proposed solution. Total cost of the bid may not exceed $450,000. Proposals resulting in a total cost in excess of $450,000 will be disqualified.

	Deliverable as Named in Section 5.1	Cost
1.	Name #1	$
2.	Name #2	$
3.	Name #3	$
	•	$
	•	$
	•	$
n.	Deliverable *n*	$
		Total Cost: $

6. EVALUATION

6.1. EVALUATION PROCEDURES PHASE I

Responsive Vendor responses will be evaluated strictly in accordance with the requirements stated in this RFP and any addenda issued.

The evaluation of Vendor Responses shall be accomplished by an evaluation team designated by the Exchange, which will determine the ranking of the responses.

The RFP Coordinator will evaluate the Vendor Price Quotes.

6.1.1. Clarification of Response

The RFP Coordinator may contact the Vendor for clarification of any portion of the Vendor's response.

6.1.2. Administrative Screening

Responses will be reviewed initially by the RFP Coordinator to determine on a pass/fail basis. The evaluation team will only evaluate Responses meeting all administrative requirements.

6.1.3. Qualitative Review and Scoring

Responses that pass the administrative screening review will be evaluated and scored based on responses to the requirements in the RFP.

6.2. Evaluation Weighting and Scoring

6.2.1. Evaluation of Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4

Evaluators will assign points based upon how well they believe the Vendor communicated their experience, knowledge and ability to meet the Exchange's needs.

Description	RFP Section	Maximum Possible Points	Vendor's Score
Vendor's proposed solution	Section 4.1	20	
Managerial qualifications	Section 4.2	10	
Qualifications of Vendor's proposed team	Section 4.3	10	
Transitioning the survey	Section 4.4	10	
Cost	Section 5	5	
		Score =	

Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4: Evaluators will assign points to each Scored requirement based on the effectiveness and completeness of the Vendor's response to each requirement.

Total points will be aggregated for each of the five sections. The Evaluation teams will assign scores for each of these sections based on the following:

- The Vendor receiving the highest number of points for Vendor's proposed solution will receive a baseline score of 20.

- The Vendor receiving the highest number of points for Managerial qualifications will receive a baseline score of 10.
- The Vendor receiving the highest number of points for Qualifications of Vendor's proposed team will receive a baseline score of 10.
- The Vendor receiving the highest number of points for "Transitioning the Survey" will receive a baseline score of 10.

Other Vendors in each of the four requirements sections will receive a score based on the following formula:

Vendor Score = (Vendor Points ÷ Highest Vendor Points) X Section Baseline

A score of zero by all evaluators on any Scored Requirement will result in the Proposal being disqualified.

6.2.2. Cost Proposal Evaluation

The Cost Proposal will be worth 5 points in the scoring of the proposals.

The RFP Coordinator will score the Vendor's price where:

- The Vendor submitting the lowest Total Cost will receive a score of 5 points.
- Other Vendors will receive a score based on the following formula:

Operational Vendor Score = (Lowest Vendor Price ÷ Vendor Price) X 5

6.3. EVALUATION – PHASE II OPTIONAL ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Up to three (3) of the highest ranking candidates from Phase I may be submitted for consideration in Phase II. Phase II will consist of an interview with individuals selected by the Exchange. The Exchange may require candidates selected for Phase II to submit references to the RFP Coordinator. At the sole discretion of the Exchange, the Apparently Successful Vendor may be selected based upon the results of the interview(s).

6.4. NOTIFICATION TO PROPOSERS

Firms whose responses have not been selected for award will be notified by e-mail.

7. POST AWARD

7.1. OPTIONAL VENDOR DEBRIEFING

Only Vendors who submit a Response may request an optional debriefing conference to discuss the evaluation of their Response. The requested debriefing conference shall occur on or before the date specified in Section 1.7: RFP *Schedule*. The request shall be in writing (e-mail acceptable) addressed to the RFQQ Coordinator.

The optional debriefing will not include any comparison between Vendor's Response and any other Responses submitted. However, the Exchange will discuss the factors considered in the evaluation of the requesting Vendor's Response and address questions and concerns about Vendor's performance with regard to the solicitation requirements. The debriefing conference may take place in-person or by telephone.

A Vendor may submit a protest only after a debriefing conference has been both requested and held with that Vendor.

7.2. PROTEST PROCEDURES

Vendors who have submitted a Response to this solicitation and have had a debriefing conference may make protests. Upon completion of the debriefing conference, a Vendor is allowed five (5) Business Days to file a formal protest of the solicitation with the RFQQ Coordinator.

7.2.1. Grounds for Protest

Protests may be made after HBE has announced the Apparently Successful Vendor (ASV) and after the protesting Vendor has had a debriefing conference with the HBE. Protests may be made on only these grounds:

- Arithmetic errors were made in computing the score.
- The Exchange failed to follow procedures established in the solicitation document, or applicable state or federal laws or regulations; or.
- There was bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator.

7.2.2. Protest Process

A. Procedure

Protests are made to HBE after HBE has announced the ASV. Vendor protests shall be received, in writing, by HBE within five (5) Business Days after the Vendor debriefing conference.

B. Grounds for protest are:

- Arithmetic errors were made in computing the score;
- The HBE failed to follow procedures established in the solicitation document, or applicable state or federal laws or regulations; or
- There was bias, discrimination or conflict of interest on the part of an evaluator.

Protests not based on these criteria will not be considered.

C. Format and Content

Vendors making a protest shall include in their written protest to HBE all facts and arguments upon which the Vendor relies, and shall be signed by a person authorized to bind the Vendor to a contractual relationship. Vendors shall, at a minimum, provide:

- Information about the protesting Vendor; name of firm, mailing address, phone number and name of individual responsible for submission of the protest;
- Information about the acquisition; the HBE reference number (HBE13-004), acquisition method, the HBE Coordinator;
- Specific and complete statement of the HBE action(s) being protested;
- Specific reference to the grounds for the protest; and
- Description of the relief or corrective action requested.

D. HBE Review Process

Upon receipt of a Vendor's protest, HBE will postpone signing a Contract with the ASV until the Vendor protest has been resolved.

HBE will perform an objective review of the protest, by individuals not involved in the acquisition process being protested. The review shall be based on the written protest material submitted by the Vendor and all other relevant facts known to HBE.

HBE will render a written decision to the Vendor within five (5) Business Days after receipt of the Vendor protest, unless more time is needed. The protesting Vendor shall be notified if additional time is necessary.

E. HBE Determination

The final determination shall:

1) Find the protest lacking in merit and uphold the HBE’s action;
2) Find only technical or harmless errors in the HBE’s acquisition process conduct, determine the HBE to be in substantial compliance, and reject the protest;
3) Find merit in the protest and provide the HBE with options that may include:

    a) Correct errors and reevaluate all Responses; or

    b) Reissue the solicitation document; or

    c) Make other findings and determine other courses of action as appropriate.
4) Not require the HBE to award the Contract to the protesting party or any other Vendor, regardless of the outcome.

F. The resulting decision is final; no further administrative appeal is available.

EXHIBIT A-CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

Issued by the Washington Health Benefit Exchange

We make the following certifications and assurances as a required element of the Response, to which it is attached, affirming the truthfulness of the facts declared here and acknowledging that the continuing compliance with these statements and all requirements of the RFP are conditions precedent to the award or continuation of the resulting Contract.

The prices in this Response have been arrived at independently, without, for the purpose of restricting competition, any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other offer or competitor relating to (i) those prices, (ii) the intention to submit an offer, or (iii) the methods or factors used to calculate the prices offered. The prices in this Response have not been and will not be knowingly disclosed by the offer, directly or indirectly, to any other offer or competitor before Contract award unless otherwise required by law. No attempt has been made or will be made by the offer to induce any other concern to submit or not to submit an offer for the purpose of restricting competition. However, we may freely join with other persons or organizations for the purpose of presenting a single proposal or bid.

The attached Response is a firm offer for a period of 120 days following the Response Due Date specified in the RFP, and it may be accepted by HBE without further negotiation (except where obviously required by lack of certainty in key terms) at any time within the 120-day period. In the case of protest, your Response will remain valid for 180 days or until the protest is resolved, whichever is later.

In preparing this Response, we have not been assisted by any current or former employee of the Health Benefit Exchange or the state of Washington whose duties relate (or did relate) to the HBE's solicitation, or prospective Contract, and who was assisting in other than his or her official, public capacity. Neither does such a person nor any member of his or her immediate family have any financial interest in the outcome of this Response. (Any exceptions to these assurances are described in full detail on a separate page and attached to this document.)

We understand that the HBE will not reimburse us for any costs incurred in the preparation of this Response. All Responses become the property of the HBE, and we claim no proprietary right to the ideas, writings, items or samples unless so stated in the Response. Submission of the attached Response constitutes an acceptance of the evaluation criteria and an agreement to abide by the procedures and all other administrative requirements described in the solicitation document.

We understand that any Contract awarded, as a result of this Response will incorporate all the solicitation requirements. Submission of a Response and execution of this Certifications and Assurances document certify our willingness to comply with the Contract terms and conditions appearing in Exhibit C, or substantially similar terms, if selected as a contractor. It is further understood that our standard contract will not be considered as a replacement for the terms and conditions appearing in Exhibit C of this RFP.

We (circle one) **are / are not** submitting proposed Contract exceptions (see Section 3.1.1.9).

Vendor Signature	Vendor Company Name
Title	Date

EXHIBIT B - RFP RESPONSE CONTENT

3.1.1 Letter of Transmittal

3.1.2 Certifications and Assurances (Exhibit A; signed by authorized Vendor representative)

3.1.3 Vendor Response to RFP.