



MINNESOTA STATE

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

SYSTEM OFFICE

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) FOR EXECUTIVE SEARCH CONSULTANTS

APRIL 2022

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

FOR EXECUTIVE SEARCH CONSULTANTS

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Notice

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) does not obligate the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, its Board of Trustees or Minnesota State to award a contract or complete the proposed project and each reserves the right to cancel this RFQ if it is considered to be in its best interest. Qualifications must be clear and concise. Qualifications that are difficult to follow or that do not conform to the RFQ format or binding specifications may be rejected. Responding Vendors must include the required information called for in this RFQ. Minnesota State reserves the right to reject qualifications if required information is not provided or is not organized as directed.

Minnesota State also reserves the right to waive minor informalities and reserves the right to:

1. Reject any and all qualifications received in response to this RFQ;
2. Select a qualification for contract negotiation other than the one with the lowest cost;
3. Negotiate any aspect of the qualifications with any Vendor;
4. Terminate negotiations and select the next most responsive Vendor for contract negotiations;
5. Terminate negotiations and prepare and release a new RFQ;
6. Terminate negotiations and take such action as deemed appropriate.

Any decision to cancel or reject any and all qualifications is in Minnesota State's sole discretion. Minnesota State also reserves the right to change the evaluation criteria or any other provision in this RFQ by posting notice of the change(s) on the [Vendors and Suppliers at Minnesota State page](#). Vendors should check the site daily for updates (e.g. amendments, responses to questions) and are expected to review information on the site carefully before submitting final qualifications. Such changes or updates above constitutes written notice to each Vendor.

Definitions

Wherever and whenever the following words or their pronouns occur in the qualifications, they shall have the meaning given here:

Minnesota State: State of Minnesota, acting through its Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities on behalf of the System Office.

System Office: The central system office of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities located at Wells Fargo Place, 30 7th Street East, Suite 350, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101.

Vendor: The firm selected by Minnesota State as the successful responder(s) responsible to execute the terms of a contract.

Targeted Group Business (TGB): A business that is at least 51% owned and operated by a woman or person of color.

Minority-Owned Business Enterprise (MBE): Independent business which is at least 51% owned and operated by one or more minority group member (citizen of the United States or permanent resident who is Black, Hispanic, Asian, or American Indian).

Women-Owned Business Enterprise (WBE): Independent business which is at least 51% owned and operated by one or more women.

Economically Disadvantaged (ED) Business and Individuals: Independent business or persons which is at least 51% owned and operated by economically disadvantaged.

Veteran-Owned Business Enterprise (VO): Independent business which is at least 51% owned and operated by one or more veteran.

About Minnesota State

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is the third-largest system of state colleges and universities in the United States. It comprises 37 state colleges and universities with 54 campuses located in 47 Minnesota communities. Minnesota State serves approximately 350,000+ plus students each year. Minnesota State employs more than 15,900+ dedicated faculty and staff focused on student success. Minnesota State is an independent state entity that is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees. For more information about the colleges and universities of Minnesota State, please view its website at www.minnstate.edu.

Authority

This RFQ is undertaken by Minnesota State System Office (hereinafter “Minnesota State”) pursuant to the authority contained in provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 136F.581 and other applicable laws. Minnesota State will select the Vendor(s) whose qualification(s), and oral presentation(s) if requested, demonstrate in its sole opinion, the clear capability to best fulfill the purposes of this RFQ in a cost-effective manner. Minnesota State reserves the right to accept or reject qualifications, in whole or in part, and to negotiate separately as necessary to serve the best interests Minnesota State. This RFQ does not obligate Minnesota State to award a contract or complete the proposed project and it reserves the right to cancel this RFQ if it is considered to be in its best interest.

Project Overview

Minnesota State is requesting qualifications to assist in developing an unranked list of qualified search consultants. If it is necessary to conduct a senior leadership search, a consultant will be selected from the list. This RFQ is undertaken by the Minnesota State pursuant to the authority contained in provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 136F.581 and other applicable laws.

Accordingly, Minnesota State shall select the vendor(s) whose qualification(s), and oral presentation(s), if requested, demonstrate in the sole opinion, the clear capability to best fulfill the purposes of this RFQ in a cost-effective manner. Minnesota State reserves the right to accept or reject qualifications, in whole or in part, and to negotiate separately as necessary in order to serve the best interests of Minnesota State. This RFQ shall not obligate the SYSTEM OFFICE to award a contract or complete the proposed project and it reserves the right to cancel this RFQ if it is considered to be in its best interest.

Technical/Functional Requirements

1. College, university, or system office Leadership Needs Assessment

Based on its strategies for assisting the search advisory committee and the system office in identifying the leadership needs of the college, university, or system office, the firm will assist in developing:

- A leadership needs profile.
- The executive position description.
- Methods of soliciting a diverse applicant pool, appropriate nominations and applicant and candidate tracking.
- Methods of assessing applicants.
- Methods of assuring equal opportunity to candidates and affirmative action.

The firm will also:

- Conduct an extensive review of relevant documents, including, but not limited to, planning reports, organizational charts, and catalogs.
- Conduct thorough site visits, if requested.
- Meet with search advisory committees.
- Draft position descriptions, advertisements, and institutional profiles to be used during the search process, if requested.

Advertisements will be placed in locations as agreed upon by colleges / universities and the system office. Minnesota State will review and approve all drafts of all materials prior to finalization.

2. Assistance in Planning the Executive Search

The firm will be required to plan on-site visits, as needed, throughout the search process and provide frequent and direct contact with the system office, search advisory committee, and Board of Trustees. The firm may be asked to:

- Develop institutional and trustee understanding of the executive position.
- Develop sources of applicants.
- Develop the executive search process.
- Develop a work plan including timelines and milestones to conclude the search.

- Prepare, place, and monitor the value/success of position announcements.
- Develop specific criteria forms and reports for the assessment of applicants and nominations.

The firm will also:

- Maintain applicant and candidate files.
- Organize all aspects and details of the interview processes.
- In addition to advertising, generate electronic mailings in search of nominations and prospects with colleague institutional presidents, chancellors, association heads, and others.
- Establish review materials to assist in reading résumés, interviews, and checking references.
- Provide and recommend rating scales to be used in the selection process. All ratings submitted by committee members are to be gathered and summarized so a ranking may be established, thereby eliminating unsuitable candidates and focusing on more promising candidates.

3. Comprehensive Search Services, including identification, recruitment, and selection of candidates.

As the search gets underway, the firm may be asked to:

- Make confidential contacts with potential nominators, nominees, and references.
- Generate nominations and applications.
- Render professional selection judgments.
- Assist selected applicants in understanding the processes of the college / university, and Minnesota State.
- Arrange interviews, campus visits, and travel for candidates, and manage reimbursement of travel expenses.
- Assist management with public information about the search process, the final candidates, and the announcement of the executive appointment.
- Assist in record-keeping and verification of information.
- Provide other services appropriate to the search process.

The firm will also:

- Plan and arrange logistics for interviews.
- Prepare briefing materials for all committee members for the interviews.
- Provide initial reference checks on the candidates.
- Guide the search advisory committee as they prepare to host the visiting candidates.
- Ensure that candidates have a full and clear understanding of the position, relevant Minnesota State and State of Minnesota employment policies, total rewards including pay, benefits and performance management process for the position and other related information.
- Guide the preparation of materials between the college / university

and the system office to convey effectively the process and conclusion of the search advisory committee.

- Assist the chair of the search advisory committee to facilitate the committee's discussion of semi-finalists and the selection of three to five finalists to forward to the chancellor. Provide additional written reference information as necessary to assist the committee in this process.
- Provide a thorough assessment report on all finalists to the vice chancellor for human resources or other designee of the chancellor at the chancellor's discretion that includes references (on and off-list), background checks, and assessment of candidate strengths and weaknesses, and considerations for onboarding.
- Assist in finalizing the terms and conditions of employment of the final candidate, if requested.
- Inform candidates about the outcome of the search.

Minnesota State's Duties. Minnesota State staff will:

- Arrange and pay for any advertisements it determines necessary to place in newspapers, periodicals, on-line sites, or other publications.
- Arrange and pay for any meeting arrangements it determines are necessary for the search process.
- For candidates selected to be interviewed at the system office, make travel arrangements and reimburse such candidates for approved travel expenses.

Further:

1. Vendors will agree to submit expenses on forms provided by the Minnesota State for this purpose.
2. Vendors must complete Exhibits A.

RFQ Information Contact

An authorized representative for Minnesota State for the purposes of responding to inquiries about the RFQ is:

Name: Deb Gehrke
Title: Chief Human Resource Officer
Address: 30 East Seventh Street, Suite 350
St. Paul, MN 55101
Telephone: 651.201.1664
E-mail address: deb.gehrke@minnstate.edu

Other persons are not authorized to discuss RFQ requirements before the qualification submission deadline and Minnesota State shall not be bound by and vendors may not rely on information regarding RFQ requirements obtained from non-authorized persons. Questions must include the name of the questioner and his/her telephone number, fax number and/or e-mail address. Anonymous inquiries will not be answered.

Duration of Offer

All qualifications responses must indicate they are valid for a minimum of five (5) years from the date of the qualifications opening unless extended by mutual written agreement between Minnesota State and the Vendor.

Costs and terms of the qualifications as stated must be valid for the length of the resulting contract.

Minnesota State’s RFQ Terms and Conditions

This RFQ includes and incorporates the Terms and Conditions of Minnesota State. Vendors should be aware of the terms and conditions in preparing responses to this RFQ. Much of the language reflected in any resulting contract with Minnesota State is required by statute. If you take exception to any of the language in the terms and conditions, you must indicate those exceptions in your response to the RFQ; certain exceptions may result in your qualifications being disqualified from further review and evaluation. Only those exceptions indicated in your response to the RFQ will be available for discussion or negotiation.

Authorized Signature

The qualifications must be completed and signed in the firm's name or corporate name of the Vendor and must be fully signed by an authorized representative of the Vendor. Proof of authority of the person signing must accompany the response.

Selection and Implementation Timeline

Key Dates	Timeline
Monday, April 25, 2022	Publishes RFQ notice in State Register
Monday, May 2, 2022	Deadline for Vendors to submit clarifying questions
Monday, May 9, 2022	Deadline to publish responses to RFQ questions
Friday, May 20, 2022, 5:00 p.m. CDT	Deadline for RFQ proposal submissions
Monday, May 23, 2022	Review RFQ proposals
Tuesday, May 31, 2022	Meet to review RFQ submissions and select vendor(s)
Friday, June 3, 2022	Selected approved vendor(s) identified and notified

Minnesota State reserves the right to not award a contract. The dates noted above are estimates, but are reasonable for the purposes of presenting deadlines.

Contract Term

Minnesota State desires to enter into a contract with the successful Vendor(s) if and when a search is announced. The length of such contract(s) shall be for the duration of the search.

A list of approved search firms will be published for the system.

Proposal Deadline

Submitted qualifications must be received at the following address not later than 5:00 p.m. CT on Friday, May 20, 2022:

Institution: Minnesota State

Name: Deb Gehrke

Title: Chief Human Resource Officer

Mailing Address: 30 East Seventh Street, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101

Format of Proposals and Submission

The Vendor shall submit two [2] printed copies of its RFQ response and one copy on digital media with the RFQ response in Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format. Qualifications are to be sealed in mailing envelopes or packages with the Vendor's name and address clearly written on the outside. One copy of the qualifications must be unbound and signed in blue or black ink by an authorized representative of the vendor. Proof of authority of the person signing must accompany the response. All pages must be numbered and font size no smaller than 10 point.

Qualifications received after the Qualification Deadline date and time will not be considered. Faxed responses will not be considered. Qualifications made in pencil will be rejected. Alterations in cost figures used to determine the lowest priced qualifications will be rejected unless initialed in ink by the person responsible for or authorized to make decisions as to price quoted. The use of "white out" is considered an alteration.

Qualification Content

Vendors must submit the following information:

1. **Adherence to MINNESOTA STATE Terms and Conditions:** A statement of the objectives, goals, and tasks to show or demonstrate the vendor's view and understanding of the nature

of the qualification submission. This request for qualifications will be used to identify a list of vendors/search firms to assist institutions with executive level searches.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (Minnesota State) wishes to procure executive search consultant services from qualified vendors on an as needed basis. Selected firms will be required to conduct chancellor, president, and senior leader position searches for Minnesota State colleges and universities, and the system office. Vendors will be expected to act as independent counsel and provide executive search advice and research. While executive searches for each college/university will follow Minnesota State guidelines, the process is not fixed and may vary by college/university goals and institutional needs. While working closely and confidentially with selected search committees and other Minnesota State constituencies, firms may be asked to provide the following services:

- College/university leadership needs assessment.
- Assistance in planning the executive search including position description development, goals clarification and organization structure.
- Comprehensive search services, including identification, recruitment, selection assistance, of candidates and offer development and management.
- Candidate background and credential validation.
- Documenting search results/outcomes.

2. **Work Plan:** A description of the deliverables to be provided by the vendor along with a detailed work plan that identifies the major tasks to be accomplished during a search.

College or University Leadership Needs Assessment

Based on its strategies for assisting the search committee and the system office in identifying the leadership needs of the college or university, the firm will assist in developing:

- A leadership needs profile.
- The executive position description.
- Methods of soliciting a diverse applicant pool, appropriate nominations and applicant and candidate tracking.
- Methods of assessing applicants.
- Methods of assuring equal opportunity to candidates and affirmative action.

The firm will also:

- Conduct an extensive review of relevant documents, including, but not limited to, planning reports, organizational charts, and catalogs.
- Conduct thorough site visits, if requested.
- Meet with search advisory committees.
- Draft position descriptions, advertisements, and institutional profiles to be used during the search process, if requested.

Advertisements will be placed in locations as agreed upon by colleges / universities and the system office. Minnesota State will review and approve all drafts of all materials prior to finalization.

Assistance in Planning the Executive Search

The firm will be required to plan for on-site visits, as needed, throughout the search process and provide frequent and direct contact with the system office, search committee, and Board of Trustees. The firm may be asked to:

- Develop institutional and trustee understanding of the executive position.
- Develop sources of applicants.
- Develop the executive search process.
- Develop a work plan including timelines and milestones to conclude the search.
- Prepare, place, and monitor the value/success of position announcements.
- Develop specific criteria forms and reports for the assessment of applicants and nominations.

The firm will also:

- Maintain applicant and candidate files.
- Organize all aspects and details of the interview processes.
- In addition to advertising, generate direct mailings in search of nominations and prospects with colleague institutional presidents, chancellors, association heads, and others.
- Establish review materials to assist in reading résumés, interviews, and checking references.
- Provide and recommend rating scales to be used in the selection process. All ratings submitted by committee members are to be gathered and summarized so a ranking may be established, thereby eliminating unsuitable candidates and focusing on more promising candidates.

Comprehensive Search Services, Including Identification, Recruitment, Selection of Candidates As the search gets underway, the firm may be asked to:

- Make confidential contacts with potential nominators, nominees, and references.
- Generate nominations and applications.
- Render professional selection judgments.
- Assist selected applicants in understanding the processes of the college / university and Minnesota State.
- Arrange interviews, campus visits, and travel for candidates, and manage reimbursement of travel expenses.
- Assist management with public information about the search process, the final candidates, and the announcement of the executive appointment.
- Assist in record-keeping and verification of information.
- Provide other services appropriate to the search process.

The firm will also:

- Plan and arrange logistics for interviews.
- Prepare briefing materials for all committee members for the interviews.
- Provide initial reference checks on the candidates.
- Guide the search advisory committee as they prepare to host the visiting candidates.
- Ensure that candidates have a full and clear understanding of the position, relevant Minnesota State and State of Minnesota employment policies, total rewards including pay, benefits and performance management process for the position and other related information.
- Guide the preparation of materials between the college / university and the system office to convey effectively the process and conclusion of the search advisory committee.
- Assist the chair of the search advisory committee to facilitate the committee's discussion of semi- finalists and the selection of three to five finalists to forward to the chancellor. Provide additional written reference information as necessary to assist the committee in this process.
- Provide a thorough assessment report on all finalists to the vice chancellor for human resources or other designee of the chancellor at the chancellor's discretion that includes references (on and off-list), background checks, and assessment of candidate strengths and weaknesses, and considerations for onboarding.
- Assist in finalizing the terms and conditions of employment of the final candidate, if requested.
- Inform candidates about the outcome of the search.

3. **Qualifications of Vendor and its Personnel:** An outline of the vendor's background and experience with examples of similar work done by the vendor and a description of the type of personnel who will conduct the project, detailing their training, and work experience.

The following criteria and their identified weight will be used by SYSTEM OFFICE to evaluate the responses:

- a. Firms previous experience conducting presidential/chief executive officer/senior leader searches in higher education
- b. Firms previous experience conducting presidential/chief executive officer/senior leader searches in the public sector
- c. Firms record of providing a diversified pool of qualified candidates for presidential/chief executive officer/senior leader searches
- d. Cost in relation to level of service to be provided

In some instances, an interview will also be part of the evaluation process.

4. **Cost/Value:** Identify the level of the participation of Minnesota State in the contract, as well as any other services to be provided by Minnesota State, and details of cost allowances for this participation.

Individual contracts are negotiated between the Minnesota State institution and the vendor identified at the time of search.

Terms of Payment

Payment shall be made by Minnesota State promptly after Vendor's presentation of invoices for services performed and acceptance of such services by an authorized representative of Minnesota State. All services provided by the Vendor pursuant to the resulting contract shall be performed to the satisfaction of Minnesota State, as determined at the sole discretion of its authorized representative, and in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations. The Vendor shall not receive payment for work found by Minnesota State to be unsatisfactory or performed in violation of any applicable federal, state or local law, ordinance, rule or regulation.

Required Documents and Forms

1. Affidavit of Non-Collusion. **All** vendors must complete the [Affidavit of Non-Collusion](#) and submit it with the response.
2. Conflicts of Interest. Vendor must provide a list of all entities with which it has relationships that create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest with the work that is contemplated in this request for qualifications. The list should indicate the name of the entity, the relationship, and a discussion of the conflict.
3. Workforce Certificate. For all contracts estimated to be in **excess of \$100,000**, vendors are required to complete the Minnesota Department of Human Rights [Workforce Certificate Form](#) and submit your certification with the response (including extension options).
4. Equal Pay Certification. For all businesses with **40 or more employees** and a contract is estimated to be in **excess of \$500,000**, responders are required to complete the Minnesota Department of Human Rights [Equal Pay Certificate Form](#) or claim exemption prior to contract execution. Submit your certification with the response (including extension options).
5. Supplier Diversity. If applicable, eligible certified targeted businesses will receive preference in the evaluation of its qualifications as outlined below. Submit your certification with the response. [Supplier Diversity Form](#)
6. Preferences to small TG/ED/VO. If applicable, eligible certified TG/ED/VO businesses will receive preference in the evaluation of its cost proposal as outlined below. Submit your certification with the response. Vendors may apply for certification through the [Minnesota Small Business Certification Portal](#).

Selection Process

The selection process includes chief of staff, vice chancellor for human resources, associate vice chancellor for human resources, and the chief human resource officer for the system office. This group will evaluate the proposals and make the final decision.

RFQ Evaluation Factors

The following factors and their identified weight will be used by Minnesota State to evaluate the responses:

No.	Evaluation Factors	Weight
1.	Adherence to Minnesota State Terms and Conditions	10%
2.	Work Plan	20%
3.	Qualifications of Vendor and its personnel (experience of personnel who are committed to work on the contract will be given greater weight than that of the company)	20%
4.	Completeness, thoroughness and detail of response as reflected by the proposal's discussion and coverage of all elements of work listed above	20%
5.	Targeted Business Inclusion; respondent is a certified TGB and/or respondent commits to sub-contracting 10% or more of the value of the contract to a certified TGB	10%
6.	Experience providing diverse pools	20%
	Total	100%
7.	Preference to Small TG/ED/VO businesses and individuals, if applicable.	6%

Minnesota State reserves the right to name a date which all responding Vendors will be invited to present demonstrations or participate in an interview.

Minnesota State does not agree to reach a decision by any certain date although it is hoped the evaluation and selection will be completed by the date identified in the Selection and Implementation Timeline.

Qualifications may be rejected if it is determined that a Vendor's ability to work with the existing infrastructure will be too limited or difficult to manage.

Supplier Diversity

Pursuant to policy 5.14 and Minn. Stat. 16C.16, Minnesota State is committed to taking affirmative action to ensure that MBEs and WBEs are given equal opportunity to provide goods

and services to Minnesota State. As part of this fulfillment and commitment, vendors, partners, or subcontractors could receive up to 15% in the evaluation of the total proposal criteria.

To qualify for the Supplier Diversity Commitment, participating Vendors are required to complete the attached Supplier Diversity Form and attach hard copies of certificates verifying its certification by one of the certifying agencies recognized by Minnesota State.

Minnesota State recognizes certifications from at least one the following certifying agencies:

- [State of Minnesota – Department of Administration](#)
- [Central \(CERT\) Certification Program](#)
- [North Central Minority Supplier Development Council](#)
- [Women’s Business Development Center](#)

Preference to Small TG/ED/VO Business and Individuals:

In accordance with Minnesota Rules, part 1230.1810 and Minn. Stat. §16C.16, the basis of award is that of a certified prime TG, ED, and VO business or individual will receive a six percent (6%) preference. Preferences are not cumulative; the total percentage of preference granted on a contract may not exceed the highest percentage of preference allowed for that contract. The points are applied to the final cost of the evaluation of the project. Eligible, verified, small businesses currently listed in the [Directory of Certified TG/ED/VO](#) are eligible for the preference.

Vendors interested in becoming a certified should refer to the [Office of Equity in Procurement](#) with the State of Minnesota.