**Q&A #2**

**University of Arkansas**

**RFP #102720 – Benefits Consulting Services**

**General**

1. Why is UAS conducting an RFP for its consulting and actuarial relationships at this time?

**ANSWER:** The University conducts periodic RFPs for all consulting and vendor services.

1. What will be the composition of the selection committee?

**ANSWER:** Representatives of the UA System Office and representatives of approximately five to nine campuses including campus CHROs.

1. Can you please clarify your planning year, key decision dates for finalizing plan changes and contributions, and annual schedule for open enrollment?

**ANSWER:** The University’s plan year is calendar year.  Premium adjustments are most often made at the beginning of the fiscal year (July).  Open enrollment is held annually in November with major plan design decisions made by not later than August (preferred).

1. What are your top 3 objectives? Challenges?

**ANSWER:** Cost, compliance, competitive position.

1. How will you determine whether a bidder is "qualified and reputable?" (e.g. team resumes, client references, innovative approach, creativity, entrepreneurial thinking, etc.)?

**ANSWER:** Evaluation will include experience with similar clients, length and scope of experiences and team assigned to the University.

1. In “6. PROJECTED TIMETABLE OF ACTIVITIES,” what is the anticipated timing for the “…legislative approval, if applicable” that will dictate the official contract approval?

**ANSWER:** The timing of contract approval will be dependent upon the length of contract negotiations between the selected respondent and the UA System as well as the available meeting dates of the Arkansas Legislative Council.

**Scope of Work (SOW)**

1. The RFP states, “2. Actuarial projections, plan design evaluation and premium recommendations for the University’s self-funded health (including pharmacy) and dental plans.”
   1. Can you please provide work product examples from the current consultant to understand the level of complexity of analysis and output.

**ANSWER:** Work product must support the University’s analyses of costs, design changes and premium allocations and will typically involve multiple evaluations of varying combinations of factors.

* 1. Can you please clarify the extent to which premium equivalent rates and contributions are customized by campus, number of scenarios anticipated, number of planning meetings?

**ANSWER:** Please refer to the University’s benefits website at [https://www.uasys.edu/](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.uasys.edu%2F&data=04%7C01%7Ctfuquay%40uasys.edu%7Ca213f85d7171459f1c5208d88a82ed1f%7C8c1a87cb80b7413f9ae855c6a5370604%7C1%7C0%7C637411642228367262%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=WizgwcWedXkRA5tMMnupoZzNmGmNuklC16oQVRu68F4%3D&reserved=0) for details on the premium allocations at each UAS campus.   Scenarios and planning sessions required will be dependent upon the changes explored by the University.

1. Does the scope of work include HSA, health and dependent day care flexible spending account design?

**ANSWER:** Yes.

1. The RFP states “9. Participation in and support for system-wide benefits meetings.” Can you please clarify the frequency and locations of the meetings and the expected level of participation by the consultant?

**ANSWER:** Onsite meeting opportunities are unknowable in the current environment.  Historically, two System-wide (all campuses participating) meetings are provided each year.  Meetings with the System Office staff will be required as requested, with most provided through remote access and will occur not less than quarterly.  Weekly, and often daily interaction with System Office staff through email on a range of compliance, plan design, cost impact and communications issues must be supported in a timely manner.

1. Can you please describe the current level of annual support provided for the paid leave benefits?

**ANSWER:** Extensive evaluation of current paid leave programs has been conducted.  Future support will be dependent upon any decisions for program changes or enhancements.

1. Do you typically involve the consultant in vendor management issues? If so, how do you decide when to include the consultant, and to what extent?

**ANSWER:** Yes.  As needed to resolve issues.

1. UAS is asking for “Experience in coordinating and managing data exchange and analyses among plan vendors in support of relevant Information supporting University benefits and pricing decisions.”
   1. What is meant by managing data exchange and analysis?

**ANSWER:** The University does not participate in a data warehouse service or program.  Coordination of data among/from vendors is necessary for complete analyses of programs and program changes.

* 1. Please describe the current level and extent of support currently provided (e.g., management oversight of the data, analysis, provider of an separate 3rd party data warehouse).

**ANSWER:** Not applicable.

* 1. If there is a data warehouse,
     1. What warehouse tool is used today.

**ANSWER:** Not applicable.

* + 1. Clarify which benefits and information is included currently.

**ANSWER:** Not applicable.

* + 1. Please share examples of data warehouse reports provided in the past to understand the level and expected complexity of analysis

**ANSWER:** Not applicable.

* 1. Does UAS anticipate that an RFP for the selection of a data warehouse will be part of the SOW?

**ANSWER:**  Not in the immediate future.

* 1. Does UAS anticipate that the consultant will be responsible for developing cost/outcomes insights from a data warehouse or simply reporting on metrics already developed?

**ANSWER:** The consultant selected will be expected to actively participate with the University in developing options and opportunities as well as in the reporting and interpretation of data.

1. Is there any anticipation that the consultant will conduct training sessions (e.g., HIPAA training, training on the American Disabilities Act, wellness rules)? If so, what is the anticipated frequency?

**ANSWER:** Yes. Training sessions of this type are not expected to exceed two to three events per year.

1. To what extent will the SOW include consultant involvement in other postemployment benefits (e.g., postretirement medical)?

**ANSWER:** Post retirement benefits cost evaluations (GASB valuation and reporting) is conducted separately and not a part of this RFP.   The successful vendor(s) will evaluate and support retiree benefits offerings.

* 1. Strategy

**ANSWER:** Yes.

* 1. GASB valuation (e.g., conducting the valuation, supplying information to the current actuary, reviewing valuation)

**ANSWER:** Addressed above.

* 1. Premium equivalent rate setting

**ANSWER:** Yes.

* 1. Contribution rate setting

**ANSWER:** No.

* 1. Design and modeling

**ANSWER:** Yes.

* 1. Considering exchange options

**ANSWER:** Yes.

1. For each of the items above where the consultant is involved, can you please provide a copy of the valuation and deliverables throughout the year?

**ANSWER:** No.

**Communications**

1. Will all University of Arkansas System campuses be required to use the same benefits and communication strategies that are developed as part of this RFP effort or will each campus be responsible for making its own decision?

**ANSWER:** Benefits offerings and communications are increasingly uniform across all UAS campuses.  Please refer to the UAS benefits website at [https://www.uasys.edu/](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.uasys.edu%2F&data=04%7C01%7Ctfuquay%40uasys.edu%7Ca213f85d7171459f1c5208d88a82ed1f%7C8c1a87cb80b7413f9ae855c6a5370604%7C1%7C0%7C637411642228377257%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=1GfWaCniWBy5yOtKP0lKocZ464DrbifEiZ9w6TPM6RQ%3D&reserved=0) for examples of programs and communications uniform across all campuses.

1. If multiple benefits offerings and or communication strategies are needed, how many different ‘programs’ will the winner of the RFP be responsible for supporting?

**ANSWER:** Not applicable.

1. What type of support is the University seeking (e.g., strategy, website development/maintenance, oversight, content development, vendor coordination)?

**ANSWER:** Yes.

1. Can you provide an inventory of all the communication materials that you created and/or distribute during a calendar year so we can understand the magnitude of your communication strategy?

**ANSWER:** Please refer to the UA System website for example communications information.

1. What channels of distribution are currently used?

**ANSWER:** System-wide mailings, system-wide email distributions through the campuses, campus level communications and UAS website communications.

1. What level of communication support do you need for any wellness/wellbeing programs?

**ANSWER:** Not applicable.

1. Can you please clarify the expected involvement of the consultant in the open enrollment communications process (e.g., establishing communication strategies, “draft” materials, graphic design work, drafting the benefits guide, conducting open enrollment meetings)?

**ANSWER:** Participation in open enrollment meetings would be in exceptional circumstances only.  Yes, to all other examples listed.