



STRENGTHENING THE VOICES OF CASA STATEWIDE

Request for Proposals: Investment Consultant Firm

About Texas CASA:

Texas CASA is the statewide organization that provides funding, resources, training and support to the 74 local CASA programs in Texas to ensure they can operate effectively and seek out the best possible volunteers who will advocate passionately for the children and families they serve. Texas CASA is a registered 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to support local CASA volunteer advocacy programs and to advocate for effective public policy for children and families in the child protection system.

Texas CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) is part of a national volunteer movement that began in 1977 in Seattle when a juvenile court judge conceived the idea of citizen volunteers speaking up for the best interests of children who are in foster care due to allegations of abuse or neglect. Today, the CASA movement has evolved into one of the largest volunteer organizations in the country. CASA volunteers are appointed by judges to watch over and advocate for these children in court, school and other settings; with the goal of reuniting children with their families whenever safe and possible. Volunteers stay with each case until it is closed with the goal of ensuring these children are kept safe and have the opportunity to thrive and grow.

Texas CASA is an inclusive, welcoming and affirming organization that values, celebrates and actively seeks out diverse candidates. We are an equal opportunity employer and do not discriminate against any individual, employee or applicant on the basis of race, national origin, color, creed, sex, age, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, or veteran or citizenship status. People of all identities are encouraged to apply.

A. Scope of Request

Texas CASA is requesting proposals from qualified investment consultant firms as described. The objective of the consulting firm will be to assist the Texas CASA's Board and Staff to ensure annual returns are sufficient to assist in funding current operations of the Organization, as well as developing and carrying out investment policies that are designed to ensure that sufficient assets are available to meet current and future benefit obligations.



Texas CASA is soliciting proposals from firms who can:

- Provide broad investment expertise
- Provide Texas CASA with a full range of investment services
- Create long term net returns for each asset class in comparison to reference indices, especially with respect to other managers with a similar portfolio
- Maintain appropriate care in managing the assets of the endowment and reserve

B. Locations

Texas CASA's primary office location is in Austin, Texas. While a local firm is not necessary, local representation is desirable.

C. Deliverables and Duties

Texas CASA seeks a partner to oversee and execute the selection, monitoring, and evaluation of its investments. Texas CASA will continue to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities in setting policy regarding the endowment and the investment allocation schedule as well as the spending rate. Texas CASA realizes that to obtain the best investment return with the least amount of risk requires extensive expertise due to today's complex markets and timing. Therefore, Texas CASA seeks an investment partner to provide services which will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Investment Policy and Procedures – reviewing investment-related policies and procedures and making appropriate recommendations for changes.
- Portfolio Analysis – reviewing asset allocations and structures and making recommendations for appropriate changes.
- Reporting – provide quarterly performance reports, including but not limited to, performance data and analysis for the total fund, individual asset classes; detailed analysis, including return attribution analysis, portfolio characteristics, style and risk analysis, peer universe comparisons; and holdings analysis relative to benchmarks.
- Manager Research and Analysis – to manage the selection, retention, and dismissal of investment managers, performing the necessary due diligence and providing summary reporting.
- Research – to perform the necessary due diligence on investment markets to ensure optimal performance, including monitoring, rebalancing and reporting.
- Training, Development, and Reporting – to report via video conference quarterly to Finance Committee and report in-person annually to the full board; separately, to conduct an annual introduction to endowment management for new Board and/or Finance Committee members, if requested.

D. Qualifications

Minimum qualifications:

- Be a registered investment advisor under the Investment Company Act of 1940
- Agree to act as a "fiduciary" with respect to Texas CASA



- Have provided similar investment consulting services to other nonprofit organizations of similar asset size as Texas CASA
- Independence of judgement and avoidance of conflicts of interest in providing services. Firm will be required to disclose all conflicts of interest, all sources of revenue and all affiliations especially, but not limited to, investment managers contracted by the firm

Highly preferred qualifications:

- Have been in business for a minimum of ten (10) years OR if the firm has not been in business for at least ten (10) years, the senior principals of the firm must have at least ten (10) years' experience with institutional clients at an investment consulting firm
- Have primary individual(s) assigned to Texas CASA with five (5) or more years professional experience in the investment consulting field
- Employ a professional team or department dedicated to investment manager research and analysis
- Diversity of the firm and investment team, including if the firm is HUB certified
- Texas-based and/or local office

E. Contract Term

Texas CASA seeks a 2-year contract, with 2 optional renewal periods of 2 years for a total period of six years.

F. How to Submit a Proposal

Please submit the completed proposal with the cover letter, signed Appendix A representations/warrantied, responses to questions in Appendix B, sample investment strategy, three (3) references, and quote for services no later than close of business on Monday, April 15, 2024 to contracts@texascasa.org .

The Response must be accompanied by a cover letter that should be signed by at least one individual who is authorized to bind the firm contractually. The cover letter must include:

- How the firm meets the requirements listed in Sections A, C, and D above.
- The firm name, address, E-mail address and telephone number
- The client contact
- The title or position which the signer of the cover letter holds in the firm
- A statement to the effect that the Response is a firm and irrevocable offer of the firm.

Appendix A with the Representations and Warranties must be signed by an authorized officer of the firm and included as an attachment to the cover letter previously referenced.

The questions and/or requests in Appendix B shall be duplicated in their entirety in the Response with each question and/or request repeated before the answer or response.



Sample Investment Strategy and References:

- A sample investment strategy of how your firm would allocate Texas CASA's current portfolio of \$8.16 million based on Texas CASA's Investment Policy Statement (enclosed). As noted in the IPS, Texas CASA expects 5% returns, net of inflation and fees, and allows assets used the asset allocations below:

Asset Allocation for the Total Fund (70/30)		
Asset Class	Allowable Range Minimum – Maximum	Firm's Proposed Allocation
Domestic Equity	30%-50%	
International Equity	20%-35%	
Total Equity	50% - 80%	
Domestic Fixed Income	15%-30%	
International Fixed Income	5%-12%	
Total Fixed Income	20%-40%	
Cash Equivalents	0% - 5%	

- Three references for your prior work. Please provide names and contact details.

Fees and Quotation:

A firm estimate of the cost to manage Texas CASA's portfolio, as outlined in Appendix B. If the fee structure/tier will change based upon certain asset or transaction criteria, please include that information.

For questions regarding the contract or proposal please email Tamea Byrd, tbyrd@texascasa.org prior to Monday, April 8, at 5 p.m. CT.

After initial evaluation of the proposals, the top 2-3 firms will be invited to participate in Round 2 and present to the Finance Sub-Committee during the weeks of May 6-10 or May 13-17. The full Finance Committee and board review are expected by the end of June. Details regarding Round 2 presentations will be provided to selected 2-3 vendors when notified.

Responses will be reviewed and scored against the following criteria:

- Stability and experience of investment consulting firm
- Experience, depth of knowledge, and track record providing similar investment consulting services to other nonprofit organizations
- Access to various investment vehicles and asset classes
- Experience and communication of the personnel assigned to Texas CASA
- Good standing based on compliance assessment
- Cost, including the proposed initial and renewal fees



Appendix A

REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES

All respondents must meet the following representations and warranties:

- Respondent warrants that it will not delegate its fiduciary responsibilities.
- Respondent warrants that it has completed, obtained, and performed all registrations, filings, approvals, authorizations, consents or examinations required by government or governmental authorities.
- Respondent warrants that it meets all of the minimum qualifications applicable to the firm of this RFP as follows:
 - Be a registered investment advisor under the Investment Company Act of 1940.
 - Agree to act as a “fiduciary” with respect to Texas CASA.
 - Have provided similar investment consulting services to other non-profit or educational institutions of similar asset size to Texas CASA.
 - Employ a professional team or department dedicated to investment manager research and analysis.
 - Have individuals assigned to Texas CASA with a minimum of five (5) years professional experience in the investment consulting field.
 - Disclose all conflicts of interest, all sources of revenue and all affiliation.
 - Respondent warrants that it has not paid and will not pay, has not given and will not give, an remuneration or thing of value directly or indirectly to Texas CASA or any of its board members, officers, employees, or agents, or any third party except as disclosed to Texas CASA with its response to this RFP or otherwise, including, but not limited to, a finder’s fee, cash solicitation fee, or a fee for consulting.
 - Respondent warrants that it has established ethics and conflicts of interest policies and procedures, and proper internal compliance controls are in place.

Authorized Signature:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____



Appendix B

Firm Information

1. Firm name and contact information.
2. Firm classification:
 - a. Bank
 - b. Insurance Company
 - c. SEC-Registered Investment Advisor
 - d. Non-U.S. Registered Investment Manager (country and entity registered with)
 - e. OtherIf other, please explain.
3. Brief history of firm, including ownership, with an emphasis on any material developments in the past three years. Please include prior names and the length of time your organization has been in business under its present name and ownership.
4. Organizational chart of firm.
5. Firm's current succession plans.
6. Name of parent firm (if any) and the name of affiliations or subsidiaries (if any).
7. Date of firm inception.
8. Name of regulatory body overseeing the firm, this style of portfolio, and the dates of registration, as appropriate.
9. Firm's fidelity bond and fiduciary liability insurance policies, including coverage amounts.

Client Service

1. Please indicate the scope of services that will be provided for this account. Please include a description of how client servicing/communication responsibilities are divided between portfolio managers and client service/marketing personnel and how often portfolio managers meet with clients to review the portfolio.
2. Please describe the client-reporting process. How frequently are reports made available?
3. Please provide a history of portfolio manager turnover.

Compliance

1. Please describe the compliance assessment process, including the time period covered, testing methods, and frequency.
2. When was the last compliance assessment? Please attach a summary of the report, if possible.
3. To whom does the chief compliance officer report?
4. Please provide a copy of the registration forms you have provided to your local regulator. (If you are an SEC-registered adviser, please provide your firm's Form ADV, Part 1 and 2.)



5. When was your firm's last regulatory inspection (e.g., by the SEC in the United States or the Financial Services Authority in the United Kingdom)? Please provide a summary of the inspection results.
6. Has any regulatory body or market authority issued any orders or other sanctions against your firm in the last five years? If yes, please describe.
7. Is your firm or any affiliate the focus of any pending or ongoing litigation, formal investigation, or administrative proceedings related to money management activities? If yes, please describe.
8. Have the principals of your firm been under investigation related to money management activities in the last ten years? If yes, please explain.

Proxy Voting

1. Please provide the identity of any third-party proxy voting services used by your firm.
2. If your firm uses proxy voting services, how are these firms selected?
3. Please list the amount paid to any proxy voting services used by your firm over the last three years.
4. If your firm uses proxy voting services, are these services paid for directly or through soft dollars?

Trading

1. Please describe any restrictions you may have on client-directed transactions.
2. Please describe your policies and procedures concerning trading and execution, including those relating to:
 - a. How your firm seeks to achieve best execution
 - b. How your firm ensures equitable trading for all clients (i.e., the account of one client is not favored above the account of another) and exceptions to this policy, if any
 - c. Allocation of trades (e.g., by portfolio manager or automated)
 - d. Side-by-side management of hedge funds and other portfolios, if applicable. When answering this question, you may refer to Schedule F of Form ADV Part 2, if appropriate.
3. What manager selection subscriptions or proprietary research tools are used by your firm?

Brokerage/Soft Dollars

1. What is your firm's approach to the use of soft dollar arrangements?

Firm Risk

1. Please provide a CV or resume of the person(s) who is (are) responsible for the overall risk management of your firm.

Portfolio Risk

1. Please describe how your firm controls portfolio investment risk.



2. How does your firm currently measure/track risk for this style of portfolio (e.g., standard deviation, beta, other)?
3. Do you stress test your portfolios? If so, how do you stress test your portfolios?

Research

1. Please provide an overview of your research, including the use of fundamental, technical, and quantitative analyses. Please provide any additional comments that are unique to your firm.

Performance

1. If your firm is GIPS® compliant, please attach a GIPS-compliant presentation for this style of portfolio. If your firm is **not** GIPS compliant, please attach a chart detailing your firm's performance for this service for at least the past 10 years, including as much detail as possible beyond merely performance data.

GIPS Compliance

Please respond to Questions 1-2 if your firm is GIPS compliant:

1. How many years has your firm been GIPS compliant?
2. Has your firm been verified? Please specify the name of your verifier and provide a verification letter. Please provide the number of years your firm has been verified.

Please respond to Questions 3-15 if your firm is NOT GIPS compliant:

Please name and define the composite for the strategy that is the subject of this RFP.

3. Please name and define the composite for the strategy that is the subject of this RFP.
4. When presenting gross of fees returns, please disclose if any other fees are deducted in addition to trading expenses.
5. When presenting net of fees returns, please disclose exactly what other fees are deducted in addition to the investment management fees and trading expenses.
6. If your firm uses a custom benchmark, please describe the benchmark and the process and rationale behind the creation of this benchmark.
7. Please include a measure of dispersion used for each composite, including the reason why that measure of dispersion was chosen.
8. Please disclose your firm's treatment of withholding tax on dividends, interest income, and capital gains.
9. Please disclose and describe any inconsistencies in the exchange rates used among the portfolios within a composite and between the composite and its benchmark, if applicable.
10. Please disclose the policy used to allocate cash to carve-out returns, if applicable.
11. Please disclose the use of any sub adviser(s) and the periods used.
12. Is there a minimum asset level below which portfolios are not included in a composite? If so, what is that level?
13. Please disclose the currency used to express performance.



14. Is additional information regarding policies for calculating and reporting returns available upon request?
15. Please disclose if your firm does not value portfolios at the end of each month (i.e., either the last day of the month or the last business day of the month). If so, please explain why not.