



**American Public Human Services Association| Impact and Innovation
Department**

**CHILD WELFARE RESEARCH & DATA ANALYST
CONSULTANT**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

RFP No.: II-001

Important Dates

RFP Release Date:	10/7/2026
Written Questions Due Date:	10/19/2026 5 pm ET
Proposal Due Date:	10/30/2026 5 pm ET

Proposals must be submitted via email to Carolyn Carter (ccarter@aphsa.org). **PROPOSAL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED AFTER 5 PM TIME (ET) ON 10/30/2026 WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** The American Public Human Services Association is not responsible for any errors of omission. Mailed, faxed, hand delivered proposal, or proposals submitted outside of the submission process listed above will not be accepted.

The American Public Human Services Association does not discriminate against faith-based organizations or against any Bidders or Proposer(s) because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.

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INTRODUCTION & INTENT

The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) invites qualified consultants to submit proposals to provide **part-time research, data analysis, and policy synthesis support** for **Child Welfare Forward**, a national engagement initiative focused on advancing meaningful policy and practice reform within the child welfare and broader human services systems.

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), APHSA seeks an experienced consultant with demonstrated expertise in research and analysis, stakeholder engagement, and the synthesis of complex qualitative and quantitative information. The selected consultant will work collaboratively with APHSA initiative leadership and project staff to support the collection, organization, analysis, and interpretation of information generated through Child Welfare Forward's national engagement activities. These activities may include listening sessions, focus groups, interviews, surveys, workgroups, convenings, and written feedback opportunities.

A central objective of this engagement is to ensure that information and perspectives gathered from diverse stakeholders are systematically analyzed and translated into meaningful, policy-relevant findings. The selected consultant will be expected to identify recurring themes, areas of consensus and divergence, emerging questions, implementation considerations, and other significant findings; integrate stakeholder perspectives with relevant research, policy information, existing evidence, and prior recommendations; and develop clear, concise analytical products that can be used by APHSA leadership, initiative workgroups, funders, stakeholders, and other audiences to inform ongoing decision-making and the development of policy and practice recommendations.

The anticipated period of performance is **twelve (12) months from contract award**, with an estimated level of effort of approximately **two hundred fifty (250) hours** over the contract period. The level and timing of work may fluctuate based on the schedule of stakeholder engagement activities, project priorities, analytical needs, and reporting deadlines. The selected consultant must therefore demonstrate the capacity to work collaboratively and independently, respond to evolving project needs, manage competing priorities, and produce high-quality deliverables within established timelines.

APHSA anticipates awarding **one contract with a total value not to exceed Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000 USD)** for the full period of performance. Respondents should propose an approach and cost structure that demonstrates their ability to successfully perform the required services and deliverables within the anticipated level of effort and available funding. This is a part-time consultancy.

ISSUING ENTITY

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) Impact and Innovation Department in support of Child Welfare Forward. APHSA will serve as the contracting entity and will administer the solicitation, evaluation, selection, and resulting contractual engagement.

BACKGROUND

APHSA is leading Child Welfare Forward, a national engagement initiative designed to build momentum for policy and practice reform in three interconnected areas: federal child welfare financing and accountability; child welfare agency decision-making at the intersection of poverty and neglect; and the use and timing of termination of parental rights and other permanency practices.

The initiative builds on work launched by the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) in 2025, including *Charting the Course: A Blueprint for Child Welfare Financing and Accountability Reform* and related workgroups focused on poverty and neglect and termination of parental rights.

APHSA will engage national, state, tribal, local, community, research, philanthropic, and lived-experience stakeholders to strengthen shared understanding, refine proposed reforms, and identify practical considerations for implementation. Engagement activities may include town halls, listening sessions, focus groups, interviews, surveys, workgroups, convenings, and written feedback opportunities. Findings will inform initiative strategy, policy and practice recommendations, progress reporting, and communications with funders, stakeholders, and policymakers.

PURPOSE

APHSA seeks a part-time Research and Data Analyst consultant to provide practical, independent support for synthesizing stakeholder feedback and developing policy-relevant summaries. The consultant will help APHSA systematically learn from information collected through Child Welfare Forward and translate that learning into clear, actionable findings and recommendations.

The engagement will emphasize analysis, synthesis, and clear, concise writing. The consultant will support the collection, organization, and analysis of stakeholder information; identify recurring themes, areas of consensus and divergence, implementation considerations, and emerging questions; integrate stakeholder perspectives with relevant research, policy information, and prior recommendations; and assess engagement reach and effectiveness for technical and non-technical audiences.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Information Management

Working collaboratively with the APHSA project team, the consultant will review initiative goals, work plans, engagement strategies, BPC reports and recommendations, and other relevant materials; design or refine surveys, interview and focus-group guides, listening-session protocols, and other practical data collection tools; establish practical and secure processes for organizing, managing, coding, documenting, and quality-checking information collected; and develop summary methods appropriate for diverse stakeholder groups, including public agencies, tribal and rural communities, and individuals with lived experience.

Expected products may include information-management protocols and a stakeholder feedback framework and template.

Stakeholder Feedback, Research, and Policy Synthesis

The consultant will analyze qualitative and quantitative feedback generated through listening sessions, focus groups, interviews, surveys, workgroups, convenings, and written submissions; identify recurring themes, concerns, priorities, proposed solutions, implementation considerations, and areas requiring additional inquiry; examine commonalities and differences across stakeholder groups, regions, system roles, and initiative focus areas while accurately representing underrepresented perspectives and limitations of the available information; integrate stakeholder feedback with BPC recommendations, existing evidence, and emerging research; and prepare timely syntheses, decision memos, research summaries, or recommendation matrices for initiative leadership and workgroups.

The bulk of this analysis is anticipated to occur during the final four months of the contract period. Expected products may include stakeholder feedback syntheses and targeted research and policy analysis products developed as mutually agreed.

CORE DELIVERABLES & ANTICIPATED SCHEDULE

The selected consultant will be responsible for developing a series of research, analysis, and synthesis products throughout the contract period in collaboration with the APHSA Project Team. Within thirty (30) days of contract award, the consultant will develop an Information Management Framework establishing the processes and tools that will be used to organize, manage, document, and support the analysis of information collected through Child Welfare Forward engagement activities.

Throughout the engagement, the consultant will prepare Stakeholder Feedback Syntheses on a weekly and/or monthly basis, as determined by project needs and the timing of stakeholder engagement activities. These syntheses will capture key themes, areas of consensus and divergence, emerging questions, implementation considerations, and other relevant findings identified through listening sessions, focus groups, interviews, surveys, workgroups, convenings, and written feedback.

The consultant will also develop Summary Feedback Analyses for Workgroup Members, as mutually agreed upon with the APHSA Project Team. These analyses will support the initiative's workgroups by translating stakeholder feedback, relevant research, and policy information into concise and useful findings that can inform ongoing discussions, decision-making, and the refinement of policy and practice recommendations.

By the conclusion of the contract period, the consultant will prepare a Final Summary Report in collaboration with the APHSA Project Team. The report will synthesize the major findings and themes identified throughout the engagement and present relevant recommendations and/or policy options informed by stakeholder feedback, existing evidence, emerging research, and the broader objectives of Child Welfare Forward.

The consultant will also participate in routine virtual project meetings, support preparation for presentations as needed, and complete reasonable revisions to agreed-upon products. These activities are considered part of the overall scope and anticipated level of effort and should be incorporated into the respondent's proposed approach and cost.

ELIGIBLE BIDDERS

This opportunity is open to qualified independent consultants and consulting entities with demonstrated experience relevant to the scope of services. Respondents should demonstrate knowledge of child welfare, public human services, family-serving systems, federal financing and accountability, or related policy areas; experience working with public agencies, policymakers, courts, national associations, philanthropy, or community-based organizations; and experience conducting research and analysis for complex policy, systems-change, community engagement, or public-sector initiatives.

Respondents should also demonstrate experience analyzing and accurately representing perspectives from diverse stakeholder groups, strong analytical writing skills, the ability to translate complex findings into concise and actionable products, and the ability to work independently, exercise sound judgment, manage multiple priorities, and meet time-sensitive deadlines. An advanced degree in public policy, law, social science, social work, public administration, or related discipline, or equivalent professional experience, is preferred.

SCHEDULE FOR RFP SUBMISSION, REVIEW & AWARDS

ACTIVITY	DATE
RFP Published on LinkedIn and APHSA website	10/7/2026
Questions submitted	10/19/2026
Responses to questions submitted published by	10/23/2026
Deadline to submit Proposal	10/30/2026
Selection of Successful Bidder on or around	Early November
Program operations to begin NO LATER THAN	Mid November

Question submission process

All individuals intending to bid either as a sole applicant or as the lead of a consortium proposal are encouraged to submit any questions in writing by 10/19/2026 to Carolyn Carter (ccarter@aphsa.org). Responses will be posted on the APHSA website by COB 10/23/2026.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted via email to Carolyn Carter (ccarter@aphsa.org) by email no later than 5 pm ET, 10/30/2026. Proposals not received by the deadline will be automatically

disqualified from competition – no exceptions. Mailed, faxed, or hard copy proposals will not be accepted.

Proposals should be prepared in a professional manner and provide sufficient information for APHSA to evaluate the respondent's qualifications, experience, approach, availability, and cost. At minimum, each proposal should include: (1) a current resume, curriculum vitae, or consultant biography; (2) a statement of interest, not to exceed 500 words, describing relevant policy and report-writing experience, experience analyzing and synthesizing stakeholder feedback, relevant child welfare/human services/public policy knowledge, and availability during the anticipated contract period; (3) one relevant work sample or link to a publicly available analytical product; and (4) the consultant's proposed hourly rate and overall cost proposal for completing the scope of work.

No additional attachments are allowed. Bidders may submit the required attachments as part of their electronic submission.

COMPLETED PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Proposals must be received no later than date and time listed in the Schedule for RFP Submission Review. Proposals not submitted through the on-line application portal will not be considered. Individual Proposals will not be read in public or available for public inspection until after an award determination has been made and agreement is executed. Note: Technical questions and technical support regarding the on-line application will be accepted and answered individually up to the proposal submission deadline listed above in the schedule of events.

TERMS

APHSA anticipates that total funding of **up to forty thousand dollars and zero cents (\$40,000.00 USD)** will be available for any contract awarded through this RFP. Proposals must not exceed \$40,000.00 for the full anticipated twelve (12)-month period of performance. Respondents should provide a proposed hourly rate and an overall cost proposal that demonstrates how the proposed services can be completed within this not-to-exceed amount.

Funding for this RFP is expressly contingent upon final budget approval and availability of funds. The anticipated level of effort is approximately two hundred fifty (250) hours over twelve (12) months; however, workload may fluctuate based on engagement activities and reporting deadlines. Respondents selected as a result of this solicitation may be required to participate in contract negotiations with APHSA, and any award shall be contingent upon satisfactory completion of those negotiations. The contract term is anticipated to **begin in early to mid-November 2026** and continue for twelve (12) months from contract award, unless otherwise negotiated by APHSA.

QUESTIONS

All questions regarding the RFP must be submitted in writing via email to **Carolyn Carter** (ccarter@aphsa.org) no later than 5 pm ET **10/19/2026**; interested bidders are strictly prohibited

from directly contacting members of the APHSA Board of Directors and APHSA staff regarding this RFP.

PROPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS

APHSA will consider the respondent's demonstrated qualifications and relevant experience; understanding of the requested services; proposed approach to research, stakeholder feedback analysis, synthesis, and reporting; ability to perform the work within the anticipated schedule and level of effort; quality and relevance of the submitted work sample; and cost.

The total proposed cost must not exceed \$40,000 USD. APHSA may invite a small number of respondents to participate in a brief interview and may request references from finalists. The final work plan and product formats may be refined collaboratively with the selected consultant following award, provided that any refinements remain consistent with the material scope, deliverables, funding ceiling, and purpose established in this RFP.

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Responsive proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by a qualified review committee using the scoring methodology identified below. Evaluation will consider the respondent's demonstrated qualifications and experience, relevant subject-matter expertise, research and analytical capabilities, understanding of the scope of services, proposed approach, quality of submitted work products, capacity to perform the work within the anticipated period of performance, and proposed cost.

A maximum of 100 points is available. **Respondents must achieve a minimum score of 80 points to be recommended for final consideration.** APHSA reserves the right to consider overall best value in determining the successful respondent and is not obligated to select the respondent proposing the lowest cost.

SCORING METHODOLOGY	
Ranking Factor	Point Value
Background & Demonstrated Experience	20
Relevant Child Welfare / Human Services / Policy Knowledge	15
Research, Data Analysis & Stakeholder Synthesis Experience	20
Proposed Approach & Understanding of Scope	20
Analytical Writing / Work Sample	10
Availability, Capacity & Ability to Meet Deliverables	5
Budget & Cost Proposal	10
TOTAL AVAILABLE POINTS	100 POINTS

BIDDERS CONDITIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND AUTHORIZATIONS

A Bidder or an authorized representative may withdraw or modify their proposal by submitting written notice to the APHSA Issuing Office prior to the exact date and time specified for proposal receipt.

The Bidder's representations, certifications, and information provided in the proposal are material and important. APHSA may rely upon the contents of the proposal during evaluation, negotiation, and any resulting contractual engagement. The Bidder agrees that their proposal will remain firm and valid for a period of one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from the proposal submission deadline or until a final agreement is fully executed.

If selected, the Bidder will be considered a subrecipient of a federal award and shall adhere to the **Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200)** and all other applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

The Bidder certifies that the costs and amounts proposed were developed independently, without collusion or consultation with any other potential Bidder or party. Bidder has not disclosed, and will not disclose, their pricing or proposal terms prior to the official deadline stated in the RFP.

The Bidder affirms that no attempt has been made, nor will be made, to induce any person or firm to refrain from submitting a proposal, to submit a higher proposal, or to submit a deliberately noncompetitive proposal.

The Bidder affirms that it has not recommended or influenced the scope or specifications of this solicitation under any separate engagement with APHSA that could result in a conflict of interest.

The Bidder certifies that it is not currently suspended or debarred by any federal agency or any state or local government. If the Bidder is unable to certify this, it must provide a written explanation with the proposal.

The Bidder agrees to clearly identify and describe the services offered in response to this RFP. Organization, clarity, and thoroughness of the response are critical and will be evaluated accordingly.

All proposal forms must be complete, legible, and accompanied by all required attachments, exhibits, or supplemental materials in a well-organized format.

APHSA shall not be liable for any costs incurred by the Bidder in preparing and submitting a proposal, participating in the RFP process, or anticipating award of the resulting agreement.

APHSA reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted or obtained through investigation demonstrates that the Bidder is not qualified or capable of performing the services outlined in the RFP.

APHSA reserves the right to investigate the Bidder's qualifications through means such as reference checks, site visits, and verification of past performance.

To the best knowledge of the individual signing the proposal, the Bidder, its affiliates, subsidiaries, officers, directors, and employees have not been convicted of, nor are currently under investigation for, any prohibited act under federal or state law involving collusion, conspiracy, fraud, or public contracting.

The Bidder certifies that it has no delinquent federal or state obligations, including unpaid taxes or unresolved audit findings, unless otherwise disclosed in the proposal.

No legal agreement shall exist until a written contract or subrecipient agreement is fully executed by both Bidder and APHSA. APHSA reserves the right to modify any aspect of the contract, including scope, deliverables, funding levels, and duration, based on its organizational needs and availability of funds.

If awarded, the Bidder will assume full responsibility for the services and deliverables proposed, whether delivered directly or through subcontractors. The use of subcontractors must be clearly defined in the proposal. Any changes to subcontractors require prior written approval by APHSA.

Bidders shall not issue press releases, advertisements, social media posts, or any other public communications related to this project without prior written approval from APHSA.