



**CWDS**  
Child Welfare Digital Services

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

ON BEHALF OF THE  
CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY,  
OFFICE OF SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

# **Solicitation No. 34145 - Independent Advisor**

**February 25, 2021**

## A. Purpose of this Solicitation

The California Department of Technology (CDT), on behalf of the California Health and Human Services Agency, Office of Systems Integration (OSI), is issuing this solicitation to solicit firms to provide the services of an independent advisor. The Independent Advisor will use data and insights to independently assess if the Child Welfare Services – California Automated Response and Engagement System (CWS-CARES) Project (hereinafter referred to as the Project) is on track to deliver a solution and set of services that meets or exceeds Child Welfare Digital Services (CWDS) goals and user needs, and to provide related guidance and recommendations to the Project team, the Executive Leadership Team (ELT), and the Board of Directors (BOD). Specifically, following an initial review and assessment related to overall schedule and budget assumptions, the Independent Advisor will assess the approach to developing the solution functionality and related data infrastructure on an ongoing basis and will recommend, when applicable, alternative approaches that might increase speed to value, improve the solutions ability to meet the needs of program and users, reduce costs, or enhance overall usability and quality. The Independent Advisor reports to the Health and Human Services Office of the Agency Information Officer (OAIO) and provides its recommendations to the Board of Directors, the State control agencies, and the Project Team. The successful firm must have demonstrated proven ability to deliver complex Salesforce solutions, perform strategy and solution alternatives analysis, and interact with senior executives through effective written and oral communications.

**The winning firm of this solicitation shall be precluded from being awarded or working under any contract resulting from the following solicitations for the CWS-CARES Project: Platform as a Service (PaaS) Systems Integrator (Solicitation No. 34060), CARES Data Infrastructure (Solicitation No. 34061), Product Value Services (Solicitation No. 34059), and independent verification and validation (IV&V) services (for the term of this Agreement). Further, individuals who participated in the planning, preliminary discussions, strategy, compromises, drawing of plans and specifications, and solicitations of bids related to this solicitation are also prohibited from being awarded or working under this Agreement.**

## B. Negotiations Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 6611

This solicitation is being conducted under Public Contract Code (PCC) section 6611, which provides the authority to use a competitive negotiation process when the State's business need or the purpose of a procurement or contract is known, but negotiation is necessary to ensure that the State is receiving the best value or the most cost-efficient goods, services, information technology, and telecommunications.

This solicitation will utilize a competitive negotiation process to achieve the following goals:

1. Ensure that the firms clearly understand the State's requirements before attempting to develop their Best and Final Offer (BAFO);
2. Ensure that the State clearly understands how the firm intends to meet the requirements before those submissions are finalized; and

3. Give the State and firms the opportunity to discuss proposals and potentially unacceptable elements of a firm's submission and provide the opportunity to modify submissions to correct issues.

Award of a contract, if made, will be to the firm that meets and/or exceeds the State's requirements and provides the best value to the State. Any contract executed as a result of this solicitation may be amended by mutual consent of the State and the firm. The State anticipates the contract term will be three (3) years.

## **C. Background, Approach, and Vendor Roles Overview**

The following sections are intended to provide additional context and clarity on the project's background, the CWS-CARES delivery approach, the enterprise architecture approach (explaining the relationship between Salesforce and CDI), and the primary vendor roles involved with delivering the CWS-CARES.

### **C.1 CWDS Background**

Child Welfare Digital Services (CWDS) is replacing the State's legacy child welfare systems, including the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS), the Licensing Information System (LIS), and the Field Automation System (FAS), with the new Child Welfare Services - California Automated Response and Engagement System (CWS-CARES). CWS-CARES will be the State's Comprehensive Child Welfare System (CCWIS) (see 45 C.F.R. §1355.50-59), comprising both Salesforce applications and CARES Data Infrastructure (CDI) services hosted on Amazon Web Services (AWS) infrastructure.

As the State's CCWIS, CWS-CARES must:

- Contribute to improving safety, permanency and well-being outcomes for children and families
- Further State child welfare program goals and reinforce the Integrated Core Practice Model (ICPM)
- Generate and maintain high-quality longitudinal data to support rigorous program evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)
- Meet CCWIS requirements for modularity, data quality monitoring and data exchange with an array of partners, including Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs).

CWS/CMS, first deployed in 1997, is functional, but not at the level required to meet Federal and State requirements. In 2015, the State established CWDS, a unique collaboration involving the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the Office of Systems Integration (OSI) and the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), to deliver a new child welfare system.

### **C.2 CWS-CARES Delivery Approach**

CWS-CARES, as a highly regulated, safety-critical and data-intensive system, will be substantially different than the legacy systems it replaces. Such fundamental improvements may include new mobile digital experiences, self-service capabilities for families and community partners, streamlined administrative workflows and an underlying domain (data) model that better supports program and practice

improvement. In accordance with CARES Product Development Guiding Principles ([https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds\\_IAdvisor\\_34145\\_bidders\\_library](https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds_IAdvisor_34145_bidders_library)), CWS-CARES must also ensure State independence and control of vital assets, such as business rules, and equip the State to readily extend the system as child welfare policy and practice evolve.

CWDS will deliver CWS-CARES through a user-centered, research-based, iterative and agile process described in the CWS Playbook ([https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds\\_IAdvisor\\_34145\\_bidders\\_library](https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds_IAdvisor_34145_bidders_library)). The CARES Blueprint ([https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds\\_IAdvisor\\_34145\\_bidders\\_library](https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds_IAdvisor_34145_bidders_library)) defines over 200 Product Building Blocks covering Screening, Investigations, Community-based Connection, Case Management (including Adoption and Aftercare), Courts, Eligibility, Resource Family Applications, Licensing, Resource Management and Financial Management. The CARES Product Roadmap ([https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds\\_IAdvisor\\_34145\\_bidders\\_library](https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds_IAdvisor_34145_bidders_library)) combines and sequences those Building Blocks, along with supporting Shared Services (e.g. Search, Document Management), into a series of Testable Increments (TIs).

Each TI will deliver not only product features, but also converted data, to Staging and Sandbox environments to invite user feedback in the context of intensive scenarios. Each TI will start with timeboxed Discovery and Prototyping, so that the iterative exploration of opportunities and prioritization of scope reflects insights from delivered software. All delivered milestones/modules will have a clear Value Hypothesis (logic model) that shows how product features contribute to process efficiencies, practice fidelity, program goals and, ultimately, child and family outcomes. Accordingly, all delivered milestones/modules must include the data engineering and product analytics work required to produce reliable metrics to gauge those results.

CWDS has learned, through numerous proofs of concept, that continuous deployment to Production is not feasible with emergent processes, such as Screening and Investigations, that entail near-real-time synchronization (of safety-critical child and family information) with legacy systems. Accordingly, the project will look for opportunities, as Product Delivery Teams progress through the Roadmap, to deploy useful greenfield (no legacy integration) or quasi-greenfield (minimal legacy integration) feature sets to Production. The project intends to start by deploying such a greenfield tool; the Product Chief and Service Managers have been evaluating options and will make a selection in consultation with vendors.

### **C.3 CARES Enterprise Architecture - How Salesforce and the CDI Work in Tandem**

CWDS will deliver CARES using both Salesforce and the CARES Data Infrastructure (CDI). Salesforce provides the platform for operational applications that automate day-to-day child welfare workflows. The CDI is more than just a replica of Salesforce data or a conventional data warehouse; the CDI provides a set of managed data services, such as data quality monitoring, that are as important to the administration of child welfare as the user-facing features provided through the Salesforce platform. *Together*, Salesforce and the CDI make up California's Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS); the CDI is required for CCWIS compliance.

The primary purpose of the CDI is the management of high-quality longitudinal data for program evaluation and Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). This directly furthers the State's goal, set forth in the recently updated State Data Strategy, to "accelerate and align the creation of enduring longitudinal datasets...." In child welfare such data includes long-running assessment, removal, placement and service histories for all families who have experienced involvement with the child welfare system. Under the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA), this data must now cover new populations eligible for prevention services. It would not be technically advisable or cost effective to maintain such long-running histories on Salesforce.

The CDI communicates bi-directionally with Salesforce, in near real-time, to monitor and improve data quality, calculate metrics, generate alerts/recommendations and exchange data with Child Welfare Contributing Agencies (CWCAs) and other partners. Crucially, the CDI provides product analytics, which help the project understand user behavior, apply those insights to improving product features and gauge the product's contribution to process efficiencies, practice fidelity and program outcomes. In other words, the CDI makes it possible to use key performance indicators (KPIs) to assess and improve product value.

The CDI also preserves State independence and control of vital assets, including content (data, documents and media) and business rules. Accordingly, the CDI hosts:

- A Business Rules Repository and Engine, which ensures that CARES policy and program rules are portable to another platform, should the State replace Salesforce.
- Document and Template Management, which maintains the definitions of forms, assessment instruments and survey instruments outside of Salesforce. This also equips the State to apply advanced analytics (text analytics, for example) to unstructured content, such as notes and narratives.
- Registries, which manage all CARES reference (master) data and provide tools for detecting, resolving and preventing duplicate records for key entities such as Person, Address, Provider and Facility.
- Identity Management, with a shared Active Directory that integrates with county directories to control access to both Salesforce and CDI resources.

Throughout CARES development the CDI will host a Data Conversion Workspace, a set of data profiling, transformation and cleansing tools, along with data staging areas, that support the migration of legacy data to Salesforce. The CDI vendor will maintain and operate this utility for the Product Delivery Team's use. Successful delivery of product features must include not only Salesforce workflows, but also supporting CDI data services and converted production data.

#### **C.4 Vendor Roles Overview**

Four vendors will support the State in delivering CARES. These vendors include Product Value Services (PVS), PaaS Systems Integrator (PaaS SI), CDI Services and an Independent Advisor.

The PVS vendor will focus on CARES Business Architecture. This vendor will provide research, service design, user experience design, business (primarily rules) analysis and data science expertise to Product Delivery Teams and fulfill two key responsibilities:

- Represent and advocate for the State's program goals for CARES; and
- Align the Product Roadmap with program goals (product value) and CARES Product Development Guiding Principles.

The PaaS SI will focus on CARES Solution Architecture and delivery. This vendor will provide product strategy, architecture, engineering and (Salesforce-focused) design expertise to Product Delivery Teams and fulfill three key responsibilities:

- Be the primary systems integrator and deliver a complete CCWIS, including both Salesforce and CDI components that work together architecturally, technically and functionally;
- Deliver converted, cleansed data of sufficient quality to support the administration of child welfare through the lens of new CARES product features; and
- Set up, maintain and operate the CARES delivery pipeline (all environments), including both Salesforce and CDI components.

The CDI vendor will provide data architecture and engineering expertise to Product Delivery Teams and fulfill two primary responsibilities:

- Set up, maintain and operate the CDI as the data platform for CARES; and
- Use CDI-based tools to build selected CDI data services, including metric calculation logic, reports and data exchange APIs.

The Independent Advisor will use data and insights to independently assess if the CWS-CARES project is on track to deliver a service that meets or exceeds CCWIS compliance, CWDS goals and user needs. While the team has a well-defined approach and roadmap, there is interest in understanding alternatives that could increase speed to value, reduce costs, and increase the usability of the solution. The primary responsibilities are:

- Within the first sixty days following contract execution, conduct an initial review and assessment of the overall resource strategy in the context of the planned approach for design, development, implementation, maintenance and operations of the CWS-CARES solution, with a focus on understanding if and how the project could reduce cost and time while delivering the full scope and adhering to the CARES Product Development Guiding Principles;
- Assess and fully understand the team's proposed approach and assumptions, on an ongoing basis, for developing and delivering specific product roadmap functionality;
- Conduct independent analyses, using information and market solution data gathered through research that might offer a competing approach;
- Based on this understanding and related research, independently identify and develop feasible and realistic document alternatives, data driven

project strategies, recommendations, and solutions approaches; and

- Informally and formally present independent views, competing perspectives, alternative approaches and supporting data to the Project Stakeholders, including the OAIO, the ELT, the BOD, and State control agencies at key meetings including the monthly BOD meeting.

All vendors are responsible for understanding CCWIS requirements and ensuring that components they develop are in alignment with CCWIS regulations, technical bulletins, policy Q&A, self-assessment tool, etc. All vendors are, furthermore, responsible for supporting the State in preparing for technical assistance (TA) and compliance reviews and correcting deficiencies that result in non-compliance findings/barriers.

#### **D. Process of the Solicitation**

This solicitation contains instructions regarding the process for firms to submit responses to this competitive solicitation using the phased approach described below.

This solicitation addresses the firm's responsibilities and the requirements that firms must meet to be eligible for consideration. Firms are expected to follow the format and use all forms included in this solicitation necessary for their response. Firms must adhere to all requirements. All State questions must be responded to, and all requested data must be supplied. All responses must be received by the time and date specified in this document under Section F, Key Action Dates or in a State-provided notice. Responses submitted after the deadline or that are incomplete may not be accepted or evaluated.

Email all responses to the Procurement Official's email address at: [OSI-IA34145@state.ca.gov](mailto:OSI-IA34145@state.ca.gov). For procurement purposes, emailed responses will be considered properly "sealed" if received prior to the time and date specified in Section F, Key Action Dates. Solicitation responses sent to any other email address will not be considered. If necessary, multiple emails can be submitted as long as the subject of the email contains, "Part X of Y" (X identifies the number assigned to this email, and Y identifies the total number of emails expected). It is the responsibility of the firm to confirm their submission is received by the Procurement Official. All submissions are considered final.

At the State's discretion throughout the entire solicitation, the State may negotiate with firms and notify firms of areas where their responses would render the submission non-compliant and/or non-responsive to the requirements. This notice will provide an opportunity for the firm to resubmit compliant responses by the date and time specified by the State in the notice.

Responses that contain false or misleading statements, or that provide references that do not support an attribute or condition claimed by the firm, may be rejected. If, in the opinion of the State, such information was intended to mislead the State in its evaluation of the response, and the attribute, condition, or capability is a requirement of this solicitation, the firm's response will be rejected.

All documents submitted in response to this solicitation will become the property of the State of California and are subject to the California Public Records Act, California Government Code section 6250 et seq., the California Evidence Code, and other applicable state and federal laws, despite any markings indicating the documents are proprietary or confidential.

The CWS-CARES Bidders' Library contains reference materials, web links, and other documents to support this solicitation. Items in the Bidders' Library may be updated at any time without issuance of an addendum to this solicitation. The Bidders' Library can be accessed here: [https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds\\_IAdvisor\\_34145\\_bidders\\_library](https://cwds.ca.gov/cwds_IAdvisor_34145_bidders_library)

1. SOLICITATION PHASE 1- ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE, STAFF MANDATORY QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS, NARRATIVE QUESTIONS, AND COSTS

a. Phase 1 General Information

The objective of Phase 1 is to invite firms to submit a response to the State's administrative requirements, the staff mandatory qualifications requirements, the narrative questions, and to obtain costs. In addition, firms will have the opportunity to ask questions (using Exhibit I - Template for Questions) and make requests for changes (RFC) (using Exhibit J – Template for RFC) via email and receive responses from the State on a continuous basis up to the final question and answer date set forth in Section F, Key Action Dates.

Firms are eligible for the following preferences as established by state law: Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) incentive and Small Business (SB) preferences. The firm must complete and submit a separate Exhibit R, Commercially Useful Function Documentation for each DVBE and SB subcontractor to be used in the performance of the contract.

**DVBE Participation Requirement**

The DVBE Participation Requirement has been waived for this solicitation.

**DVBE Incentive**

In accordance with section 999.5(a) of the Military and Veterans Code, an incentive will be given to firms who propose DVBE participation as a prime or one or more California-certified DVBE subcontractors. The incentive is only given to those firms who propose DVBE participation in the resulting contract. The State shall apply an incentive amount based on the amount of DVBE participation obtained, up-to five percent (5%).

**Small Business (SB) Preference**

Per Government Code section 14835 et seq., firms that qualify as a SB will be given a five percent (5%) preference. The rules and regulations of this law, including the definition of a small business for the delivery of goods and services, are contained in 2 CCR section 1896, et seq.



The five percent (5%) preference will be applied to certified SB firms submitting proposals. To obtain the SB preference, firms must be certified as a SB at the time the proposal is submitted.

### **Non-SB Preference**

A five percent (5%) bid preference is available to a non-SB claiming twenty-five percent (25%) California-certified SB subcontractor participation. Firms claiming the five percent (5%) preference must commit to subcontract at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the net bid price with one or more SB subcontractors. In the event of a tie in high numerical score between a certified SB and a non-SB or a non-SB contracting with a certified SB, the contract will be awarded to the certified SB.

#### **b. Phase 1 Response Submittal**

A firm's response shall include all documents as indicated in the tables below.

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS</b>	
<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Description</b>
Exhibit A	Information and Offer Certification Sheet
Exhibit B	Iran Contracting Act of 2010
Exhibit C	Certification to Do Business in California
Exhibit D	Payee Data Record (STD 204)
Exhibit E	California Civil Rights Laws Certification
Exhibit F	Confidentiality Statement
Exhibit G	Federal Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Certificate
Exhibit Q	Bidder Declaration (GSPD-05-106)
Exhibit R	Commercially Useful Function (CUF) Documentation
Exhibit S	DVBE Declarations Form (STD. 843)
Exhibit N	Certification of Compliance with California Mandates
Exhibit O	Workers' Compensation Certification

<b>STAFF MANDATORY QUALIFICATIONS REQUIREMENTS</b>	
<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Description</b>
Exhibit L	Staff Mandatory Qualifications Table

<b>NARRATIVE QUESTIONS</b>	
<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Description</b>
Exhibit K	Narrative Questions

<b>COSTS</b>	
<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Description</b>
Exhibit H	Cost Worksheet

A firm's response shall constitute a firm offer, which shall remain irrevocable for not less than one hundred eighty (180) calendar days following the scheduled date for contract award set forth in Section F, Key Action Dates. In the event of a delay in contract award, a firm may extend the expiration date of its firm offer by written notice to the State. The State's execution of a contract under this solicitation shall not be considered a rejection of any unsuccessful firm's offer. All firm offers received shall remain irrevocable for the period described above. The State reserves the right, upon termination of any contract and without initiating a new solicitation process, to accept any other firm's offer and form a contract with that other firm. The State may continue to terminate and contract with any other firms, as described above, until the expiration of all firm offers pursuant to this solicitation.

c. Phase 1 Evaluation

Responses will be evaluated based on best value, which consists of the evaluation criteria set forth in Exhibit T.

After evaluation, the State reserves the right to proceed further in the negotiation process. Please refer to Exhibit T for additional information on this process.

2. SOLICITATION PHASE 2 – NEGOTIATIONS

a. Phase 2 General Information

The objective of Phase 2 is to negotiate with selected firms and have those firms submit a Best and Final Offer (BAFO).

b. Phase 2 Response Submittal

If the State elects to ask firms to submit a BAFO, exact requirements and best value criteria will be provided to firms prior to the BAFO submittal deadline.

c. Phase 2 Evaluation

Responses will be evaluated based on best value and the identified criteria. Upon evaluation of the BAFOs, the State may either continue negotiations or award a contract to the firm that provides the best value to the State.

**E. Procurement Official**

The Procurement Official (State PO) contact information for this solicitation is:

Gabe Nielsen  
CA Department of Technology  
10860 Gold Center Drive  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95608  
Telephone: (916) 431-3630  
E-mail: [OSHA34145@state.ca.gov](mailto:OSHA34145@state.ca.gov)

All inquiries, questions, and proposals must be directed to only this person, unless otherwise identified in this solicitation. The State PO will also act as the department contact for visits or other information.

Oral communications directly with the procurement official and employees concerning this solicitation shall not be binding on the State. Firms should only rely on written statements issued by the State PO.

#### F. Key Action Dates

No.	Event/Action	Elapsed Time
1.	Solicitation release	February 25, 2021
2.	Bidders Conference – Via Webex  When it's time, start your Webex meeting here: <a href="https://caltech-meetings.webex.com/caltech-meetings/j.php?MTID=m7c7ff6dac7e41322f4fb03de9ec0154d">https://caltech-meetings.webex.com/caltech-meetings/j.php?MTID=m7c7ff6dac7e41322f4fb03de9ec0154d</a>  Meeting number: 133 418 4917 Password: p3hMtcebf37  Audio connection: +1-415-655-0045 US Toll 1-855-797-9480 US Toll Free	February 26, 2021
3.	Last date to submit Q&A and RFC	March 2, 2021 by 5:00PM
4.	Final date for Phase 1 submission	March 10, 2021 by 12:00PM
5.	Evaluations and clarifications of Phase 1 responses	March 10, 2021 through March 12, 2021
6.	State notifies firms of Phase 1 evaluation results and invitation to Phase 2	March 12, 2021
7.	Phase 2 Round of Negotiations and BAFO	March 18, 2021 through March 19, 2021
8.	Staff interviews	March 15, 2021 through March 17, 2021
9.	Notification of Contract Award	March 26, 2021
10.	Contract Execution*	Est. 30 day after submission to ACYF

Note: Dates are subject to change without addendum

\*NOTE: FIRMS ARE ADVISED THE PROPOSED CONTRACT START DATE IS CONTINGENT UPON FEDERAL APPROVAL.

**G. Award Protest**

An unsuccessful firm shall have no right to protest the results of the negotiating process undertaken pursuant to PCC section 6611.

**H. AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

To comply with the nondiscrimination requirements of ADA, it is the policy of the State of California to make every effort to ensure that its programs, activities, and services are available to all persons, including persons with disabilities.

For persons with a disability needing a reasonable accommodation to participate in the procurement process or for persons having questions regarding reasonable accommodations of the procurement process, you may contact the Procurement Official identified in Section E. You may also contact the State of California at the numbers listed below.

Important: To ensure that we can meet your need, it is best that we receive your request for reasonable accommodations before the scheduled event, e.g., meeting, conference, workshop, etc., or deadline due-date for procurement documents.

**The California Service Telephone Numbers are:**

TTY/VCO/HCO to Voice	English	1-800-735-2929
TTY/VCO/HCO to Voice	Spanish	1-800-855-3000
Voice to TTY/VCO/HCO	English	1-800-735-2922
Voice to TTY/VCO/HCO	Spanish	1-800-855-3000
From or to Speech-to-Speech	English and Spanish	1-800-854-7784