

ISANA
Notice of Request for Proposal
Employee Retention Credit Application
RFP No. 2024-01

Notice is hereby given that ISANA is requesting proposals from qualified CPA firms to prepare and submit the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) application and related services (hereinafter referred to as **Proposer[s]**) on behalf of ISANA.

Proposers should not construe from this notice that ISANA intends to enter into a contract with the Proposer unless, in the opinion of ISANA, it is in the best interest of ISANA to do so. ISANA reserves the right to negotiate final contractual terms with the successful Proposer.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) documents are available on ISANA's website:
<https://isanaacademies.org/requests-for-proposals/>

ISANA will record and provide answers to any questions or requests for clarifying information about this RFP during the question and answer period.

Proposers must submit written proposals via **email as a single PDF document** to John Vargas, Chief Operations Officer, at jvargas@isana.org.

ISANA will accept all proposals received on or before **Monday, January 22, 2024**. Except for unusual circumstances as determined by ISANA, ISANA will not accept proposals that are received after the deadline.

Proposers do not have to submit a proposal covering the entire Scope of Work. ISANA will accept proposals covering all or any portion of the services described in the Scope of Work. All proposals must clearly and specifically indicate which services are included in the proposal.

ISANA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, and to waive any errors or corrections in a proposal or in the proposal process. ISANA will award the contract based on a review and analysis of the proposals that determines which proposal best meets the needs of ISANA. Following the review and analysis of all responsive proposals, ISANA staff will make a recommendation to the ISANA Board of Directors at a duly noticed board meeting.

Request for Proposal

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Introduction/Purpose of Solicitation

The purpose of this RFP is to enter into a contract with a qualified CPA firm for the preparation and submission of the ERC application and related services on behalf of ISANA. The proposer will provide services to ISANA as described in RFP Exhibit 1, Scope of Work.

Since the first ISANA charter school opened in 2005 in Los Angeles, each one has been an anomaly in the community it serves because of its sustained academic success. ISANA enters communities continually impacted by high crime rates, high unemployment rates and poverty, and brings its culture of academic rigor, engaging curriculum, and high expectations to students who may have never had high expectations set for them. ISANA has earned a reputation for creating an atmosphere of academic excellence and also a true learning community for families. The ISANA educational program is designed to meet the needs of all pupils, but is specifically tailored to respond to its target population of primarily Latino, at-risk, and historically underperforming and underserved students. Thousands of traditionally-underserved public school families continue to choose ISANA schools because ISANA is an institution for high-quality student learning that strives to operate with integrity and transparency.

Through this RFP, ISANA seeks to promote open and free competition.

Outlined below are examples of basic competitive bidding standards ISANA will use in the issuance of this RFP:

- ISANA is soliciting competitive proposals in order to secure public objectives in the most effective manner and avoid the possibilities of fraud, collusion, etc.
- ISANA released this RFP to benefit ISANA and not the Proposers.
- Fulfillment of RFP specifications is based on full and fair competition and acceptance by ISANA of the most responsive and responsible Proposer to ISANA's requirements, as determined by ISANA when evaluating proposals based on the criteria contained in this RFP.
- The RFP provides a basis for full and fair competition among Proposers to a common standard, free of restrictions that tend to stifle competition.

The above four points are for illustrative purposes only.

To respond to this RFP, interested Proposers must present evidence of experience and ability necessary to meet the requirements stated in this RFP. ISANA staff will measure this evidence by scoring the proposals, using a point system that will rank each proposal from highest to lowest, to determine which proposals they will consider for the award of a contract.

To be competitive in this solicitation, the Proposer must:

- Carefully read the entire RFP, attachments, exhibits, any amendments, and any ISANA responses to questions before submitting a proposal.

- Ask appropriate questions or request clarification.
- Submit all required information by the deadlines.
- Follow all instructions and requirements of this RFP thoroughly and appropriately.

If a Proposer discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other errors in this RFP, the Proposer shall immediately notify ISANA of the error in writing and request clarification or a modification of this RFP. If the Proposer fails to notify ISANA of the error prior to the date for submission of proposals, and is awarded the contract, the Proposer shall not be entitled to additional compensation or time by reason of the error or its later correction.

**Schedule of Events
for
RFP No. 2024-01**

- Release of RFP January 17, 2024
- Deadline for Submission of Proposals January 22, 2024
- Board Meeting – Anticipated Proposal Selection Between January 22 – January 31, 2024
- Anticipated Contract Effective Date January 30, 2024

ISANA will make every effort to adhere to the schedule. However, ISANA reserves the right to amend the schedule, as necessary, and will post a notice of any said amendment at <https://isana.org/about-isana/requests-for-proposals/>.

General Instructions for Proposers

1. Prepare proposals simply and economically. Provide a straightforward concise description of the Proposer's capability to satisfy ISANA's requirements. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content.
2. Submit proposals for the performance of any or all the services described within this RFP. All proposals must clearly and specifically indicate which services are included in the proposal.
3. ISANA may reject a proposal if the proposal is conditional or incomplete, deemed nonresponsive, or if it contains any alterations of form or other irregularities of any kind. ISANA may reject any or all proposals or waive any immaterial deviation in a proposal. ISANA's waiver of an immaterial deviation shall in no way modify this RFP document or excuse the Proposer from full compliance with all other requirements if awarded the contract.
4. Proposers are responsible for the costs of developing proposals, and shall not charge ISANA for any preparation costs.
5. Proposers may modify their proposal after submission by withdrawing the original proposal and resubmitting a new proposal prior to the submission deadline.
6. Proposers may withdraw their proposal by submitting a written withdrawal request to ISANA's Chief Operating Officer John Vargas, signed by the Proposer or their authorized agent. Thereafter, a Proposer may submit a new proposal prior to the proposal submission deadline. Proposers may not withdraw their proposal without cause after the proposal submission deadline.
7. ISANA may modify this RFP prior to the date given for submission of proposals by posting an amendment on <https://isana.org/about-isana/requests-for-proposals/>.
8. ISANA reserves the right to reject all proposals for any reason and at ISANA's discretion. ISANA is not required to award a contract.
9. All proposals and the resulting contract(s) will be public documents reviewed by the ISANA Board of Directors at a public meeting. Proposers understand that such documents will not be kept confidential.
10. ISANA will not consider more than one proposal from an individual, firm, partnership, corporation, or association under the same or different names. Reasonable grounds for believing that any Proposer has submitted more than one proposal for work contemplated herein will cause ISANA to reject all proposals submitted by the Proposer. If there is reason to believe that collusion exists among the Proposers, ISANA will not consider any of the participants of such collusion in this or future solicitations.
11. Additional charges for regular or express delivery, parcel post, packing, cartage, insurance, license fees, permits, or for any other purpose shall be included (and separately identified) in the proposal.

12. All proposals should include the forms provided as attachments to this RFP, except that Proposers may provide cost information in an alternative format that better suits the type of services and pricing structure in the proposal, as long as it provides a description and breakdown of services and costs included in the proposal. Proposers may copy these forms. A proposal is considered responsive if it follows the required format, includes all attachments, and meets all deadlines and other requirements outlined in this RFP.
13. Proposers are responsible for examining the entire RFP package, seeking clarification for any item or requirement that may not be clear to them, and checking all responses in their proposal for accuracy before submitting it.
14. Proposers may submit their questions regarding the information presented in this RFP to John Vargas by email at jvargas@isana.org by no later than 5pm on the date set forth above. ISANA will answer all questions received by the deadline in writing without exposing the query source. Proposers may not contact any other ISANA employees directly to ask questions. Responses to all questions will be posted online on or before the date set forth above.
15. ISANA representatives reserve the right to request to inspect a Proposer's operations prior to any award of a contract.
16. ISANA reserves the right to negotiate the final terms and conditions of the contract, which may differ from those contained in the proposal, provided ISANA considers such negotiation to be in its best interest. ISANA may award the full contract to any one Proposer, or may choose to split up the contract between multiple Proposers if in ISANA's best interest.
17. Interested Proposers are invited to inspect ISANA's premises prior to submitting a proposal.
18. Proposers shall submit one copy of the proposal via email as a single PDF document to jvargas@isana.org. Proposers must ensure that the proposal is complete and inclusive of all materials required under this RFP, including any required signatures. Digital signatures are acceptable as long as the signatory intended it to have the same effect as a handwritten signature.

Proposal Requirements

To be eligible for evaluation, a proposal should adhere to the format set forth below; failure to do so may result in disqualification. Proposers should complete, label, and separate each section, and number all pages. The content and sequence of the proposal will be as follows:

Section	Title
1.	Cover Letter
2.	Minimum Requirements
3.	Proposal Questionnaire

1. Cover Letter

Only the individual(s) authorized to bind the Proposer contractually may sign the cover letter, which shall be a part of the proposal package. ISANA may reject the proposal if the Proposer fails to include the following information:

- Name and address of responding company;
- Organizational structure of the responding company (e.g., corporation, partnership, etc.);
- Proposer's Federal Employee Identification Number and Corporate Identification Number, if applicable;
- Name, title, phone number, fax number if applicable, and e-mail address of the representative who will be designated as the primary liaison to ISANA;
- Name, title, phone number, and e-mail address of the representative(s) authorized to bind the Proposer in a contract if different from the primary liaison;
- A statement expressing the Proposer's willingness to perform the services described in this RFP;
- A statement expressing the Proposer's ability to perform the services required in the Scope of Work, including availability of staff and other required resources to meet all deliverables as described in this RFP; and
- The following certification:
By signing this cover letter, I (we) certify that the information contained in this proposal is accurate and that all attachments required to be submitted as part of the proposal are certified to be true and binding upon our company.

2. Minimum Qualifications

ISANA will only consider Proposers that **meet all minimum qualifications** (as listed on Attachment A).

3. Proposal Questionnaire

The Proposal Questionnaire (Attachment B) is intended to provide ISANA with specific information concerning the Proposer's capability to provide services as described in this RFP. The proposal must address all of these items in order to be considered.

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be opened on or after the submission deadline specified in the Schedule of Events. During the evaluation process, ISANA may ask Proposers to clarify information in the proposals, but Proposers may not change their proposals.

An error in the proposal may cause ISANA to reject that proposal; however, ISANA may, at its sole discretion, retain the proposal and make certain corrections. When determining if a correction will be made, ISANA will consider the conformance of the proposal to the format and content required by the RFP and that the Proposer's intent is clearly established based on review of the whole proposal.

ISANA will open proposals to determine if they contain all the required information in accordance with this RFP. ISANA will evaluate qualifying proposals using the following factors (listed in no particular order):

- Administrative Requirements: Did the Proposer include all required information in accordance with the General Instructions and Proposal Requirements?
- Experience: Did the Proposer demonstrate experience with and an understanding of charter school and nonprofit corporation finance and accounting practices? Does the Proposer have the requisite capability and experience, as measured by performance record, years in the industry, relevant charter school experience, number of other schools served, client retention and satisfaction, and references?
- Capacity: Based on the Proposal Questionnaire responses and the Cover Letter, did the Proposer demonstrate a complete understanding of ISANA's service requirements, as described in the RFP and the Scope of Work, and can the Proposer perform those services to ISANA's satisfaction?
- Reputation: Has the Proposer demonstrated a track record in the industry of providing high quality, professional, and timely customer service, and provided positive references?
- Cost: Does the Proposer offer the requested services described in the RFP and the Scope of Work at a competitive price?

ISANA staff will recommend awarding the contract to the most responsive and responsible Proposer based on the factors above.

Attachment A

Minimum Qualifications

A Proposer must meet all of the following minimum qualifications to ISANA's satisfaction to be given further consideration. Failure to satisfy any of the minimum qualifications may result in the immediate rejection of the proposal.

As of January 17, 2024, both the Proposer's company and its key personnel meet all of the following minimum qualifications:

1. The Proposer has at least three years of experience as a licensed CPA in the State of California.

Yes _____ No _____

2. The Proposer has knowledge and experience working with California charter schools.

Yes _____ No _____

3. The Proposer has professional references that demonstrate and evidence the ability to perform the required services.

Yes _____ No _____

4. The Proposer is licensed to do business in the state of California.

Yes _____ No _____

5. The Proposer has successfully applied and received the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) for a charter school client in the state of California.

Yes _____ No _____

Attachment B

Proposal Questionnaire

This proposal questionnaire is intended to provide ISANA with specific information concerning the Proposer's capability to provide services as described in the RFP. Please be as concise as possible and limit your responses. **Type each question in the same order as listed in the questionnaire.**

1. Provide a general description of your company's qualifications and experience relevant to the minimum qualifications in Attachment A, along with any necessary substantiating information.
2. Provide a detailed description of your company's experience with the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) program.
4. Provide a list of charter schools that have applied for the ERC through your firm and indicate of which of those have been awarded.
5. Include a list of success stories related to the ERC application.
6. Include total number (and listing if possible) of charter schools that have utilized your services for the ERC application, delineating which ones have been awarded, how many are still pending, and if any have been selected for audit.
7. Include a scope of services related to the submission of the ERC application for ISANA.
8. Include proposed pricing structure for the ERC submission application and related services as outlined in the scope of services.
9. Include any additional terms and conditions related to the scope of services proposed.
10. Include any additional information that may be deemed important for the proposal evaluators to consider.