

ARKANSAS PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM, "APERS"
ARKANSAS JUDICIAL RETIREMENT SYSTEM, "AJRS"

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS ("RFQ")

APERS: GENERAL INVESTMENT CONSULTING SERVICES FOR PUBLIC MARKETS

AJRS: INVESTMENT CONSULTING SERVICES

I. INTRODUCTION

The APERS Board of Trustees ("APERS Board") and the AJRS Board of Trustees ("AJRS Board"), referred to in this RFQ collectively as "APERS/AJRS" or "the plans" or singly as "APERS," "AJRS," or "the plan," are soliciting proposals from qualified professional investment consulting firms ("investment consultant") interested in providing comprehensive investment consulting advice and services to the plans for their public markets investments (publicly traded global equities and publicly traded credit/fixed income.) "Respondent" means the party or parties that submit a response to this RFQ to be considered as an investment consultant.

The Executive Director ("ED") and administrative staff of APERS are the ED and administrative staff of AJRS.

APERS is a defined benefit plan with a valuation of approximately \$12.4 billion. The asset allocation may be found on the APERS website: <https://apers.org/investments/asset-allocation/>.

AJRS is also a defined benefit plan with a valuation of approximately \$362.6 million. The asset allocation may be found on the AJRS website: <https://arjrs.org/investments/asset-allocation/>.

The purpose of this Request for Qualification ("RFQ") is to provide information about APERS and AJRS and to establish the specifications and requirements for submitting qualifications. The term "investment consultant" as used in this RFQ shall mean the company or firm submitting qualifications for consideration.

The investment consultant will work directly with, and report directly to, the APERS ED and the APERS Deputy Director & Chief Investment Officer ("CIO"). The investment consultant will support the activities and obligations of both the APERS and AJRS staff. The investment consultant must demonstrate extensive experience and superior capability for providing investment consulting services to institutional investor clients. The investment consultant will be expected to provide both plans with market research and education. The investment consultant will serve in a fiduciary capacity to the plans. In all cases the investment consultant must offer advice solely in the interest of the plans and their beneficiaries.

There is no express or implied obligation for either plan to reimburse vendors for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals in response to this RFQ. APERS and AJRS have the sole right to determine whether a proposal meets its needs in the selection of an investment consultant and are under no obligation to select any investment consultant under this RFQ. Proposals submitted in response to the RFQ become the property of APERS and AJRS and are subject to public inspection under the Freedom of Information Act, § 25-19-101 et seq. The release of public records is governed by the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-19-101 et. seq.). Submission documents pertaining to this RFQ become the property of the State and may be subject to the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

APERS and AJRS reserve the right to modify the RFQ contents and requirements at any time prior to the submission deadline.

Fees and any other charges or costs are an important factor in the evaluation of the proposals. However, APERS and AJRS are not required to choose the lowest cost bidder. APERS and AJRS will select the investment consultant that best meets the requirements of this RFQ and serves the total needs of the Boards of Trustees, APERS and AJRS, and their members and beneficiaries.

II. SCOPE OF WORK

The general scope of work for this RFQ is to provide non-discretionary professional investment consulting services for public market investments. The investment consultant will serve in a fiduciary capacity to the plans. The investment consultant must demonstrate compatibility with the plans' goals and the ED's and CIO's direction and provide evidence of applicable experience and superior capability in one or more of the areas described below. The following are the duties and services that APERS/AJRS requires from the investment consultant:

A. Public Markets Investment Manager Search, Recommendation, and Monitoring.

1. Assist the CIO with investment manager search, recommendation, selection, investment manager guidelines, and benchmark selection.
 - a. When the CIO recommends an action, provide a memo, as appropriate, which includes an evaluation of the recommendation, and the suitability of the recommendation.
 - b. Conduct full and independent investment and operational due diligence as requested by the CIO. Due diligence should be performed in a timely manner, and complete records of all due diligence items and procedures shall be saved and maintained by the investment consultant and provided to APERS upon request.
2. Maintain research for all AJRS strategies and for APERS public market strategies including investment and operational due diligence updated regularly. For any investment strategy not under current coverage, the investment consultant will establish research coverage within a year.

3. Provide recommendations concerning the process for investment manager research, selection, and subsequent due diligence.
4. Provide on-going monitoring, reporting, and analysis of existing investment managers' portfolio attributes and characteristics.
5. Provide analysis and semi-annual commentary for public market managers under review.
6. Provide on-going monitoring and reporting with respect to investment manager's compliance with investment guidelines and regulations.
7. Provide access to analytical software and/or online portals.

B. Public Markets Structural Review and Portfolio Construction

1. Within the first year of an executed contract with the plans, complete a structural review of the domestic equity, international equity, and public credit (fixed income) asset classes to include, but not be limited to the following:
 - a. A review of portfolio construction, including risk/return profile and attribution, allocation to strategies, styles, and market segments.
 - b. Provide CIO with an assessment of the portfolio's current positioning relative to the consultant's view on expected returns and risks.
 - c. Provide CIO with ideas for maintaining the current portfolio allocation/structure or restructuring, including new areas or market segments ideas.
2. Provide ongoing analysis and insights on multi-manager portfolio construction and ongoing attribution analysis and risk management.

C. Performance Measurement Duties

1. Conduct monthly asset value reconciliations between public markets managers and the plans' custodian bank (BNY Mellon) and coordinate with APERS CIO to resolve any material differences.
2. Independently calculate monthly, quarterly, and fiscal year returns for all public markets managers and reconcile with returns reported by the investment managers and the systems' custodian bank.
3. Provide access to analytical software (or cloud-based equivalents) with details of performance attribution for public market managers.
4. Provide annual fee information for public market managers, including commingled/Collective Investment Trust (CIT) funds, to comply with fee disclosure requirements.

5. Verify investment management and performance incentive fees for public markets managers as needed.

D. Training, Education, and Client Relations Duties

1. Attend Board meetings and other special meetings as requested by APERS ED or CIO.
2. Prepare special reports as requested by APERS ED or CIO.
3. Provide strategic direction and evaluation of investment decisions and their implementation.
4. Provide investment education and training on a periodic and as needed basis as mutually agreed upon by the parties, and as may be requested by APERS ED and CIO.
5. Provide assistance on special projects, as needed.
6. Participate and assist in ad hoc workshops on specific topics designated by APERS/AJRS staff.
7. Respond to inquiries in an appropriate and timely manner.
8. Share firm research, including white papers, investment manager research reports, recommendation lists, and provide access to the investment consultant's research staff.
9. Report any significant changes in the investment consultant's organizational structure and staffing in a timely manner.
10. Make no changes in the assigned consultant team without the parties prior review and approval.

E. Additional Duties and Responsibilities

1. Create performance measurement reports quarterly.
2. Attend and present reports at Quarterly Board meetings.
3. Perform asset/liability study on entire investment portfolio.
4. Perform asset allocation analysis on entire investment portfolio.
5. Review domestic equity structure.
6. Review international equity structure.

7. Review public credit markets structure.
8. Assist CIO with pricing analysis on private markets as needed.

III. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. Blackout Period

For the duration of the RFQ process, the APERS Board of Trustees and the CIO will enter a “blackout” period during which communications and meetings between any party/parties interested in, or responding to the RFQ, the CIO, and any member of the APERS or AJRS Board of Trustees is prohibited. This blackout period is effective upon the issuance of this RFQ by the plans, which occurred on **October 20, 2025**, and continues until either the review and evaluation process is completed and a contract executed with the selected investment consultant, or the search process is otherwise ended by the Boards.

This blackout period will enable APERS/AJRS to treat all respondents fairly during the RFQ selection process and permit the review and evaluation of the responses to be fair and unbiased.

B. Blackout Conditions

1. A party/parties expressing an interest in or responding to this RFQ are to refrain from communications with the APERS Board and the CIO. Communications include meetings, telephone conversations, letters, and email.
2. The following communications are permitted during the blackout period: written inquiries submitted; any interviews scheduled as part of the RFQ evaluation process; and presentations scheduled before the Board for either plan for interviewing one or more respondents as part of the RFQ evaluation and selection process.
3. A party/parties expressing an interest in or responding to this RFQ may meet with assigned staff or a Board member only if (a) the meeting is limited to discussions that are unrelated to (i) this RFQ, (ii) the party’s/parties’ services that are covered by this RFQ, or (iii) the party’s/parties’ response to the RFQ, and (b) both the assigned staff and the Board member and the party/parties provide advance written notice of the meeting and the subject of the meeting to APERS ED.
4. A party/parties expressing an interest in or responding to this RFQ may contact assigned staff with non-substantive questions at any time prior to the response opening.
5. Nothing in this blackout period shall limit an investment consultant currently engaged by APERS/AJRS as a service provider from participating in meetings and communications

with APERS/AJRS staff, including the ED, the CIO, and any plan board member or members required to effectively conduct the business and services under the existing engagement.

6. A party/parties expressing an interest in or responding to this RFQ cannot alter language in document(s) provided under this RFQ.
7. Responses cannot be altered or amended after the response due date unless permitted by law or rule and as notified by APERS/AJRS to all respondents.

C. Time and Place for Submission of Proposals

The deadline for submission of responses is **November 21, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. Central Standard Time (CST)**. The deadline for submission is **5:00 p.m. CST**. Late submissions will not be considered. Postmarks will not be considered in judging the timeliness of submissions. Proposals that are submitted by fax will not be considered. Submissions must include one (1) completed electronic copy emailed to richmond.giles@arkansas.gov, or three (3) completed paper copies of the response mailed to the attention of Richmond Giles, Staff Attorney, Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System, 124 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 400, Little Rock, AR 72201.

The respondent should notify APERS/AJRS of any term, condition, etc., that precludes the prospective investment consultant from providing a compliant, responsive submission by October 31, 2025. Respondents should note that it is their responsibility to seek resolution of all such issues, including those relating to the terms and conditions of the contract, prior to the submission of a response.

An oral statement by APERS/AJRS will not be part of any contract resulting from this solicitation and may not reasonably be relied on by any Prospective Contractor as an aid to interpretation unless it is reduced to writing and expressly adopted by APERS/AJRS.

The submission of a response to this RFQ signifies the respondent's understanding and agreement that a RFQ process involves some subjective value judgments that will be made during the evaluation process.

D. Transmittal Letter

An individual who is authorized to bind the respondent contractually must sign a transmittal letter. This transmittal letter must indicate the signer is so authorized. A response with an unsigned cover letter may be rejected. This transmittal letter must include the following:

1. The respondent's name, address, telephone, and website address.
2. The respondent's Federal Employer Identification Number and Corporate Identification Number, if applicable.

3. The name, title or position, and telephone number of the individual signing the transmittal letter on behalf of the respondent.
4. The name, title or position, and telephone number of respondent's primary contact for the RFQ, if different from the individual signing the transmittal letter.
5. A statement demonstrating that the respondent satisfies the minimum qualifications under Section IV.A. of this RFQ. The respondent must also state whether it possesses the desired qualifications under Section IV.B. of this RFQ.
6. A statement expressing the respondent's willingness to perform the duties and services as described in this RFQ and its appendices, and an acknowledgement that the respondent agrees to be a fiduciary to APERS/AJRS, to the respective Board of Trustees, and to the members of APERS/AJRS and their survivors and beneficiaries.
7. A statement expressing the respondent's availability of staff and other required resources for performing all services and providing all deliverables.
8. A certification that all fees and conditions stated in the proposal are firm for a period of 180 days from the deadline for submission of proposals and that the quoted prices are genuine and not the result of collusion or any other anti-competitive activity.
9. A certification that no officer, employee or agent of APERS/AJRS and no APERS/AJRS Board member has any known personal or pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in this contract or the proceeds thereof.
10. A statement that identifies any personal, professional or financial relationship between respondent and its officers and employees and any APERS/AJRS Board of Trustee or APERS/AJRS staff.
11. A statement that respondent acknowledges that materials submitted pursuant to this RFQ are public records subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, § 25-19-101 et seq.
12. A description of respondent's known relationships involving APERS/AJRS, the State of Arkansas, and any of its political subdivisions for the past five (5) years from the date of the RFQ response, together with a statement explaining why such relationships do not constitute a conflict of interest. In a case of doubt regarding the significance of a relationship, a respondent is encouraged to disclose the relationship.
13. A statement that respondent acknowledges and can certify to the combined certifications listed on the State of Arkansas's "Combined Certifications for Contracting with the State of Arkansas" form attached to this RFQ as Appendix D.

E. Format and Content of Responses

The investment consultant's response to this RFQ must be organized in the format listed below:

1. Transmittal Letter.
2. Response to RFQ questions in Appendix A.
3. Additional information or attachments that may be requested by the plans.

Completeness, brevity, and clarity are important. Respondents should submit all information requested in this RFQ in the specified format. Providing incomplete or misleading data may lead to disqualification of the response.

IV. INVESTMENT CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

A. Minimum Qualifications

An investment consultant must meet the following minimum qualifications to satisfaction:

At least one key professional member of the vendor proposed for the APERS/AJRS account must have a minimum of seven (7) years of experience working with public fund clients.

The determination of whether an investment consultant satisfies the minimum qualifications is solely and exclusively within the judgment of APERS/AJRS Staff. Any proposal that does not demonstrate that the investment consultant meets these minimum requirements will not be eligible for award of the contract.

B. Desired Qualifications

1. Public Market Investing
 - a. Deep global research capabilities.
 - b. The individual investment professional(s) employed by the investment consultant and assigned to APERS/AJRS have an average of at least seven years of experience, preferably with public funds.
 - c. Demonstrated track record successful market leading recommendations.
 - d. Requisite systems and technology needed to advise a client of APERS' size and complexity.
 - e. The investment consultant must currently provide investment consulting services to at least five (5) public funds of similar size and complexity to APERS.
 - f. Ability to conduct timely background checks on all key persons and other senior personnel for potential investments.

- g. Demonstrated track record of conducting high quality operational due diligence which may require a quick turnaround in an abbreviated time frame when required under the circumstances of the investment opportunity.
2. Performance Measurement and Reporting
 - a. Demonstrated ability to deliver timely and accurate reports.
 - b. Requisite systems and technology needed to prepare performance and reconciliation analysis for a client of APERS' size and complexity.
 - c. The consultant must currently provide performance measurement and reporting services to at least five public funds of similar size and complexity to APERS.

V. EVALUATION AND SELECTION CRITERIA

A selection committee will evaluate the proposals generally in accordance with the criteria itemized below.

1. Personnel and Organization:
 - a. Experience of the investment team
 - b. Depth of the investment team
 - c. Depth of the organization
 - d. Business structure
 - e. Ownership structure
 - f. Conflict of interest issues
2. External investment manager research, selection, operational due diligence, and subsequent monitoring
 - a. Global investment manager research capabilities
 - b. Insightful investment manager research based on both qualitative and rigorous quantitative analysis
 - c. Rigorous approach to investment manager selection and subsequent due diligence
 - d. Demonstrated ability to actively introduce differentiated strategies and investment managers.
 - e. Demonstrated track record of conducting high quality operational due diligence
3. Asset Class Structuring and Risk
 - a. Capital markets research capabilities
 - b. Global portfolio construction research and evaluation capabilities
 - c. Thoughtful insights into portfolio construction of multi-manager solutions, based on qualitative and quantitative assessments
 - d. Proven innovation; creative solutions that are subsequently adopted by others
4. Fee Proposal (Section K of Appendix A)
5. Other

- a. Thoughtful approach to implementation policies, guidelines and procedures
- b. Experience and skilled in Board presentations and working with Staff
- c. Education materials of value to the Board and Staff
- d. Warranties
- e. Insurance, legal and contracting issues
- f. Client service

VI. FINAL SELECTION PROCESS

Following the evaluation of the written proposals by the selection committee, and approval of semi-finalist investment consultants by the Boards (which investment consultants do not need to attend), APERS/AJRS may invite the most highly qualified investment consultants to an oral interview with assigned staff. The interview will consist of standard questions asked of each investment consultant as well as specific questions regarding each individual response. Assigned staff may conduct site visits at the investment consultant's offices. The recommended investment consultant is expected to attend the public APERS/AJRS meeting when APERS/AJRS staff recommends that investment consultant as the public markets consultant.

APPENDIX A

Please provide your responses in [blue text](#). Sample text: [Firm XYZ was founded in XXXX.](#)

A. Warranties

1. Does the investment consultant warrant that it maintains an Errors and Omissions (“E&O”) insurance policy providing prudent coverage for negligent acts or omissions and will that coverage remain in place for the duration of the investment consultant’s services under the anticipated contract? E&O insurance is required throughout the duration of the assignment. Please specify the types and amounts of insurance coverage the investment consultant maintains.
2. Does the investment consultant warrant that all the information and statements provided in response to this RFP are complete and true? Any statement or claim found to be incomplete, misleading or false will be grounds for immediate disqualification or dismissal.
3. Does the investment consultant warrant that it is compliant with the Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS)? If not, please explain.
4. Does the investment consultant warrant that it is an SEC registered investment advisor or exempt from registration? If so, please provide copies of the investment consultant’s Form ADV. If exempt, please explain the nature of the exemption.
5. Does the investment consultant warrant that it will be directly responsible for the management of the account and services provided under the anticipated contract and that all personnel responsible for the account will be employees of the investment consultant?

B. Legal and Regulatory

1. Has the investment consultant or any officer or employee of the investment consultant (or ex-officer or employee while employed by the investment consultant) ever been involved in litigation, and specifically with a public fund, where an allegation of a breach of fiduciary responsibility was made. If yes, for each litigation matter, please provide the following information:
 - a. Full name of the case;
 - b. Court where the case was filed;
 - c. Case number;
 - d. Date the case was filed;
 - e. Summary of the allegations, including the names of all officers or employees referenced in the allegations or involved in the alleged conduct; and

- f. Procedural posture (if the case is pending) or outcome of the case (if the case is resolved).
2. Has the investment consultant or any officer or employee at the investment consultant (or ex-officer or employee while employed by the investment consultant) ever been involved in an administrative proceeding, including with a public fund, including but not limited to an arbitration where an allegation of a breach of fiduciary responsibility was made. If yes, for each administrative proceeding, please provide the following information:
- Full name of person initiating the proceeding;
 - Administrative body hearing the matter;
 - Proceeding number;
 - Date the proceeding was filed;
 - Summary of the allegations, including the names of all officers or employees referenced in the allegations or involved in the alleged conduct; and
 - Procedural posture (if the proceeding is pending) or outcome of the proceeding (if the proceeding is resolved).
3. Identify any demands or claims asserted against the investment consultant or any officer or employee at the investment consultant (or ex-officer or employee while employed by the investment consultant), including by a public fund, alleging a breach of fiduciary duty that did not proceed to litigation or an administrative proceeding. For each such demand or claim, please provide the following information:
- The name of the person asserting the demand or claim;
 - The date the person asserted the demand or claim;
 - The person's relationship to the investment consultant, officer or employee;
 - A summary of the allegations, including the names of all officers or employees referenced in the allegations or involved in the alleged conduct; and
 - How the demand or claim was resolved.
4. Identify all lawsuits filed against the investment consultant, including specifically by a public fund, or any officer or employee at the investment consultant (or ex-officer or employee while employed by the investment consultant) in the past seven (7) years, and please provide the following information for each lawsuit:
- Full name of the case;
 - Court where the case was filed;
 - Case number;
 - Date the case was filed;
 - Summary of the allegations, including the names of all officers or employees referenced in the allegations or involved in the alleged conduct; and
 - Procedural posture (if the case is pending) or outcome of the case (if the case is resolved).
5. Identify all administrative proceedings initiated against the investment consultant or any officer or employee at the investment consultant (or ex-officer or employee while employed at

the investment consultant), including by a public fund, in the past seven (7) years, and please provide the following information for each proceeding:

- a. Full name of person initiating the proceeding;
- b. Administrative body hearing the matter;
- c. Proceeding number;
- d. Date the proceeding was filed;
- e. Summary of the allegations, including the names of all officers or employees referenced in the allegations or involved in the alleged conduct; and
- f. Procedural posture (if the proceeding is pending) or outcome of the proceeding (if the proceeding is resolved).

6. Has the investment consultant been involved in an investigation or enforcement action by a regulatory agency? If yes, please explain and provide the following information:

- a. The regulatory agency or agencies involved;
- b. The dates of the investigation or enforcement action;
- c. The nature of the investigation or enforcement; and
- d. Procedural posture (if the investigation or enforcement is pending) or outcome of the proceeding (if the investigation or enforcement is resolved).

7. Have any officers or employees of the investment consultant (or ex-officers or employees while employed by the investment consultant) been involved in litigation, investigation, or enforcement action by a regulatory agency or other legal proceedings related to investment activities. If yes, please explain.

C. Organization and Personnel

1. Please provide an overview of the investment consultant, including its history and any special expertise or experience that would be relevant.

2. Please provide a description of the ownership structure of the investment consultant, including the parent company and any affiliated companies, joint ventures, and strategic alliances. If any near-term changes to the investment consultant's corporate or ownership structure are anticipated, please note them.

3. Please provide a list of owners (from largest to smallest with respect to ownership) and their ownership percentages. Please include individuals and all other entities.

4. Please provide a description of the investment consultant's organizational structure, including all operating divisions and functional areas, and the number of employees within each area. If any near-term changes to the investment consultant's organizational structure are anticipated, please note them.

5. Please list all office locations and the number of investment professionals and support staff working in each office. Please specify which office will primarily serve the APERS relationship.
6. Have there been any material organizational developments within the investment consultant's business – such as changes in ownership, personnel, business – over the past five years? Describe such developments and emphasize the impact the changes on the services requested.
7. Discuss any prospective changes in ownership, personnel, or the business scheduled or anticipated over the next 12 months.
8. Does the investment consultant or any affiliated entities offer any investment products/strategies? If so, respond to the following questions:
 - a. Describe such strategies which are offered by the investment consultant and the current assets under management in each product.
 - b. Which individual investment professionals employed by the investment consultant are involved in the management of such products?
 - c. What procedures and policies are in place to ensure any conflicts of interest between the products and the need to consult with clients are avoided? What conflicts cannot be avoided and how are these managed?
11. Please list the total number of clients:
 - a. Public plans;
 - b. Endowments and Foundations;
 - c. Corporate clients;
 - d. Individuals;
 - e. Other clients (please describe what constitutes "other clients");
 - f. Total clients.
12. List the 15 largest public plan clients (by \$AUM) as of June 30, 2025, the portfolio size, inception date of your relationship to the client, and the service provided to that client.
13. Please list the total number of professionals employed by the investment consultant in each of the categories. Please provide data as the end of June 30, 2025. Each professional listed below should be assigned to only one category.

Lead Consultants
Consultants
Asset Allocation
Capital Market Research
Investment Manager Research
Economists
Analytics/Reporting

ESG Investing
Operational Due Diligence
Total Investment Staff (sum)

Firm Management
Legal
Compliance
Other Professional Staff
Total Professional Staff (sum)
Marketing
Accounting
Administration
Total Staff

Asset Allocation
Capital Markets Research
Public Equity
Fixed Income
Private Credit
Private Equity
Real Estate
Real Assets
Hedge Funds
ESG Investing
Other Investment Research
Total Investment Research

D. Resources Dedicated to APERS

1. Please identify the professionals who would perform the requested services for APERS. Please state the number of public plan clients for which each professional is currently responsible. What percentage of time do you expect each professional will provide to APERS? For each professional, please also provide a biography as well as the following information (in the specified format):

- a. Name:
- b. Title:
- c. Expected role:
- d. Location
- e. Total years of institutional investment experience:
- f. Total years of institutional investment consulting experience:
- g. Total years with the investment consultant:
- h. Total current number of assigned accounts:

- i. Name, plan type, length of relationship, and size of each assigned client account:
 - j. Role for each assigned account (ex. Lead Consultant, Support Consultant):
2. Please explain how the team dedicated to APERS account would function, including lead consultant, back-up, and support services.
3. Please describe the investment consultant's procedures in the event that key personnel assigned to this account leave the investment consultant, are unable to serve, or are able to serve in only a reduced capacity.
4. Please describe the investment consultant's experience and capabilities for providing education to public pension plan trustees and staff. Provide examples of materials used in recent educational presentations.
5. Please describe the investment consultant's experience and capabilities for responding to special research projects as periodically assigned by the plan's trustees and staff. Provide recent examples of such projects.

E. Resources Dedicated to AJRS (if different than resources dedicated to APERS in Section D)

1. Please identify the professionals who would perform the requested services for AJRS. Please state the number of public plan clients for which each professional is currently responsible. What percentage of time do you expect each professional will provide to AJRS? For each professional, please also provide a biography as well as the following information (in the specified format):
- a. Name:
 - b. Title:
 - c. Expected role:
 - d. Location
 - e. Total years of institutional investment experience:
 - f. Total years of institutional investment consulting experience:
 - g. Total years with the investment consultant:
 - h. Total current number of assigned accounts:
 - i. Name, plan type, length of relationship, and size of each assigned client account:
 - j. Role for each assigned account (ex. Lead Consultant, Support Consultant):
2. Please explain how the team dedicated to AJRS account would function, including lead consultant, back-up, and support services.
3. Please describe the investment consultant's procedures in the event that key personnel assigned to this account leave the investment consultant, are unable to serve, or are able to serve in only a reduced capacity.

4. Please describe the investment consultant's experience and capabilities for providing education to public pension plan trustees and staff. Provide examples of materials used in recent educational presentations.

5. Please describe the investment consultant's experience and capabilities for responding to special research projects as periodically assigned by the plan's trustees and staff. Provide recent examples of such projects.

F. Conflicts of Interests

1. Does the investment consultant or an affiliate of the investment consultant serve as an investment manager for clients? If yes, please explain the rationale for the relationship. Please also discuss how you avoid the potential appearance of a conflict of interest.

2. Does the investment consultant manage a fund of funds of any type? If yes, please explain the rationale for the fund. Please also discuss how you avoid the potential appearance of a conflict of interest.

3. Discretionary and non-discretionary assets under management. Does the investment consultant provide both discretionary and non-discretionary investment management and/or consulting services to public fund clients? If yes, please provide details:

	<u>Client Type</u>	<u># of Clients</u>	<u>\$AUM/Advisement</u>
Discretionary			
Non-Discretionary			

4. Does the investment consultant or an affiliate of the investment consultant act as a securities broker-dealer? If yes, please provide more details.

5. Please list the percentage of revenues the investment consultant's ultimate parent company received in the 12-month period ended June 30, 2025, from the following sources: (Total must add to 100%.)

- a. Revenues from investment manager clients:
- b. Revenues from brokerage activity:
- c. Revenues from plan sponsor consulting clients:
- d. Revenues from other clients: (Please specify)

7. Please list the total revenue the investment consultant and that of each of its affiliates received directly or indirectly from investment managers for auditing, actuarial, benefits, or any other management consulting work for the 12-month period ended June 30, 2025.

8. Please list the dollar value of revenues, commissions or any other benefits the ultimate parent company received (or a brokerage affiliate received – please specify) because of any type of brokerage activity for the 12-month period ended June 30, 2025.
9. For the 12-month period ended June 30, 2025, please list the names of all investment management firms from which the investment consultant, each of its affiliates, and the ultimate parent company of the investment consultant has received any compensation. Please state the dollar amounts received from each entity.
10. Would the investment consultant be willing to disclose, annually or upon client request, the dollar amount and nature of all material beneficial relationships that the investment consultant or any affiliate of the investment consultant engages in with investment manager clients?
11. Please describe the investment consultant's conflict of interest policy. If the investment consultant, its affiliates, or the ultimate parent company provides investment management services, brokerage services, or services to investment managers, please include an explanation of how this policy, and any other measures taken by the investment consultant, limit the likelihood that the client could receive investment advice that is not completely objective.
12. Please explain in detail any potential conflicts of interest that would be created by the investment consultant's representation of APERS/AJRS. Please include any activities of affiliated or parent organizations as well as other client relationships that may affect services to APERS/AJRS.

G. Technology and Communication Resources

1. Please describe the investment consultant's technology capabilities and relate them to the investment consultant's consulting services or products. Do you provide any custom computer-based analytical tools to the investment consultant's clients? If so, please elaborate.
2. Please describe the investment consultant's communication technology capabilities. How does the investment consultant use technology to share and leverage information resources across the organization?

H. Investment Consulting

1. Please describe the investment consultant's philosophy toward the following:
 - a. Common beliefs about the investment markets that underpin the investment consultant's investment advice to clients.
 - b. Approach to idea generation and willingness to take a differentiated risk. Does the investment consultant's culture promote a willingness to take differentiated risks that are not widely practiced by others, or does the investment consultant prefer to adhere to a more mainstream approach and wait until an idea is accepted by many others?

- c. Would investment consultant's philosophy and approach be considered to be "our way is the ideal way and it fits all" for public plans? Will the Executive Director or CIO of APERS/AJRS ever hear a phrase similar to: "that's how we like to do it at XYZ firm?" or "that's how we have always done it"?
2. How do you prevent concentration at the asset-class portfolio level? Please provide details to support the rationale for your response.
3. How do you prevent over-diversification at the asset-class portfolio level? Please provide details to support the rationale for your response.
4. Please describe the investment consultant's process and capabilities for monitoring and reporting on market trends.
5. Please provide a few examples of research papers or other works of the investment consultant's original analysis of the capital markets.
6. Discuss the investment consultant's thoughts on the capital markets over the next 20 years. We know what has occurred in the past and how the markets reacted. Events such as the evolution of the emerging markets, the technology bubble, the credit bubble, and the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) and the COVID-19 pandemic. Please share your in-house view regarding how the capital markets may evolve and grow in the next 20 years?
7. What are the investment consultant's current views on the capital markets? In addition to any other comments the investment consultant wishes to convey, please state the investment consultant's thoughts on the risks and opportunities (and attendant strategies for avoiding and capturing) associated with the following market factors:
- a. Equity valuations
 - b. Credit Spreads
 - c. Inflation (or deflation)
 - d. Fed policy & Interest rates
 - e. Expected economic growth/slowdown
8. Please list and describe the primary research inputs and considerations including the specific analytical tools and/or software used by the investment consultant for the areas noted below. Also, briefly discuss the investment consultant's experience in each.
- a. Capital Market & Economic Research
 - b. Public Equity
 - c. Public Credit/Fixed Income
 - d. Performance Measurement/Attribution
 - e. Capital Market Assumptions

9. What are the investment consultant's expected returns and risk for domestic public equity and by sub-asset class within public equity? Some investors think public equity returns will be considerably lower in the future than they have been in the past. Please comment on why the investment consultant agrees or disagrees with that perspective, and how the investment consultant's views impact asset allocation recommendations. What will be the keys to success for investing in public equity going forward?
10. What are the investment consultant's expected returns and risk for public credit/fixed income and by sub-asset class within fixed income? Many investors think fixed income returns will be significantly lower in the future than they have been in the past. Please comment on the investment consultant's views on this matter. What will be the keys to success for investing in fixed income going forward?
11. A recent trend within Public Credit is the move away from specialist strategies towards multi-sector fixed income strategies. From a portfolio construction standpoint, how many multi-sector fixed income managers would be ideal, and why? Based on APERS/AJRS current fixed income investment managers, what changes if any would the investment consultant recommend to APERS/AJRS?
12. Does the investment consultant maintain a client accessible research database? What features would clients have access to (e.g. comments, analysis, analytic tools, due diligence memos, meeting calendars, etc.)?
13. Provide examples of investment manager recommendations that proved to be a disappointment. Why were the recommendations not successful? What did the investment consultant learn from the experiences?
14. Describe the investment consultant's investment approach within Public Equity and Public Credit across each of the following investment considerations. Please provide details to support the rationale for the investment consultant's response.
- a. Passive vs. Active investment strategies.
 - b. Fundamental vs. Systematic strategies.
 - c. Investment managers with large, sophisticated organizations vs smaller, more focused businesses.
 - d. Investment managers with many strategies vs managers with one or a few strategies.
 - e. Investment managers with a large research staffs vs managers with a more focused staff.
 - f. Generalist (multi-sector) investment managers vs sector-specialist managers
 - g. Concentrated strategies vs diversified strategies.
 - h. Strategies with high tracking error vs moderate tracking error vs low tracking error.

15. In what stage of an investment manager's life cycle would the investment consultant typically find the investment manager, conduct due diligence on the investment manager and then recommend the investment manager to clients? Supplement with examples.
16. Please describe the investment consultant's process for researching and selecting investment managers. What quantitative and qualitative factors are examined?
17. How important are onsite meetings? On average how many onsite meetings does the investment consultant conduct prior to recommending an investment manager? What factors are evaluated during an onsite meeting?
18. Does the investment consultant use virtual meetings during the investment manager due diligence process? Describe how and outline the approach to a virtual meeting versus an onsite meeting.
19. Describe the investment consultant's process for monitoring investment managers after they have been rated favorably by your firm and how does the process differ for investment managers hired by APERS/AJRS but are not rated? On average how often are subsequent meetings conducted?
20. What are the client deliverables and timelines associated with the investment consultant's ongoing monitoring of investment managers?
21. For the periods 2024 up to June 30, 2025 (an 18-month period) approximately:
 - a. How many meetings did the investment consultant hold with investment managers in each of these time periods? Please divide and summarize among on-site meetings, virtual meetings, and phone calls. Do not include those meetings held at client conferences or educational forums.
 - b. Please summarize by public market asset class (e.g. U.S. Equity, International Equity, Emerging Markets Equity, Global Equity, Opportunistic strategies, Core Fixed Income, Multi-Sector Credit, High Yield, Emerging Market Debt).
22. How many investment manager profiles were active at each year end between 2021 and 2024? How many comments were posted to the system for each year end?
23. Can you please describe the investment consultant's investment manager rating scheme.
24. Please describe the way external resources are used in the research process. Describe how the investment consultant utilizes internal and external research? Please describe internal and external systems/databases used. Please describe all systems/databases security measures.

26. Please furnish at least one example of investment manager research including any summary ratings or scoring for each of the following areas: U.S Domestic Equity; Non-U.S. Equity, and Core Fixed Income.

27. Please provide examples (2) of investment manager research for one high conviction equity manager and one high conviction fixed income manager. If one or both are included in the responses to question 52, please identify as such.

28. Please list and describe the primary research inputs and considerations including the specific analytical tools and/or software used by the investment consultant for the areas noted below. Also, briefly discuss the investment consultant's experience in each. As relevant, provide comments/data concerning the track record for the investment consultant research in each area.

- a. Capital Market & Economic Research
- b. Asset/Liability Modeling
- c. Asset Allocation
- d. Public Equity (including Long/Short and Active Extension)
- e. Fixed Income
- f. Real Estate
- i. Real Assets (Agriculture, Infrastructure, Timber, etc.)
- j. Private Equity/Private Credit
- l. Performance Measurement/Attribution
- m. Risk management/measurement
- n. Other (please specify)

29. Regarding investment manager performance:

- a. How important is past performance?
- b. How often has the investment consultant recommended investment managers that have underperformed in the years before you recommended them?
- c. What factors cause the investment consultant to recommend terminating an investment manager?
- d. Has the investment consultant recommended retaining an investment manager who has underperformed recently? Please identify the occasions when they did so, and why.
- e. Has the investment consultant recommended terminating an investment manager that has outperformed recently? Please identify the occasions when they did so and why.
- f. Has the investment consultant recommended terminating an investment manager shortly after recommending them to be hired? If so, describe the circumstances.
- g. Under what circumstances would the investment consultant recommend terminating an investment manager shortly after they recommended them to be hired?

30. Describe how benchmarks are chosen or developed and how performance is compared to similar portfolios. Describe the investment consultant's thoughts on the relevance of

benchmarks in measuring an investment manager's performance and its relevance in achieving a plan's risk and return objectives. Please indicate whether the investment consultant has ever developed benchmarks, and if so, please provide a description of the benchmarks developed and the process used.

31. Please describe the investment consultant's experience and quantitative capabilities for disaggregating and evaluating an investment manager's performance. What key criteria does the investment consultant consider when evaluating an investment manager?

32. Regarding APERS' public markets manager lineup (see details in Appendix B):

a. Which of APERS' existing investment managers are currently in the investment consultant's research coverage universe? Of those, what are the investment consultant's thoughts on APERS' existing investment managers?

b. What are the investment consultant's expected excess returns and tracking error of APERS' current public equity and fixed income portfolios? Please summarize the rationale and primary factors supporting the investment consultant's views.

c. Based on the investment consultant's preliminary review of APERS' investment manager lineup, are there any changes the investment consultant would recommend as to the type of investment managers APERS is invested in? Please discuss the investment consultant's ideas on our investment manager lineup and the recommendations of the types of investment managers with which they are most confident.

33. Regarding AJRS' public markets manager lineup (see details in Appendix C):

a. Which of AJRS' existing investment managers are currently in the investment consultant's research coverage universe? Of those, what are the investment consultant's thoughts on AJRS' existing investment managers?

b. What are the investment consultant's expected excess returns and tracking error of AJRS' current public equity and fixed income portfolios? Please summarize the rationale and primary factors supporting the investment consultant's views.

c. Based on the investment consultant's preliminary review of AJRS' investment manager lineup, are there any changes the investment consultant would recommend as to the type of investment managers AJRS is invested in? Please discuss the investment consultant's ideas on our investment manager lineup and the recommendations of the types of investment managers with which they are most confident.

34. Please state how the investment consultant expects to add value to APERS/AJRS over the next three to five years. For example, will it be through investment manager selection, risk management, cost containment, education, etc.?

35. Describe, in detail, the methodologies the investment consultant uses when conducting operational/ back office due diligence.

36. Describe the investment consultant process for ongoing operational due diligence. What are the client deliverables and timelines associated with the investment consultant's ongoing monitoring of investment managers?

37. Please describe the investment consultant's experience and capability for monitoring and providing reporting with respect to an investment manager's compliance to client guidelines and policies.

38. Please provide three recent examples of operational due diligence reports created by the investment consultant.

39. Please provide the most recent capital market assumptions from the investment consultant.

I. This section shall be answered by the person(s) who would perform the role as the primary consultant for APERS. Please answer the following questions as the primary consultant:

1. Please share your thoughts on the following comment: Regarding domestic equities it seems to be getting more challenging for active investment managers to outperform their benchmark indices. Should a domestic equity portfolio have more passive exposure? What percentage of a domestic equity portfolio should be active and what percentage should be passive?

2. Please share your thought on the following: Regarding small cap value in the U.S. markets, is private equity a substitute, a compliment, or neither to small cap value?

3. How quickly after quarter-end can you provide quarterly reports to APERS? APERS currently receives three reports from the current consultant. An executive Summary, and Board report, and a staff report. What can the CIO expect from the investment consultant?

4. The RFQ is for a public markets investment consultant. Would the CIO still have access to the investment consultant's private markets data, information, and reports?

5. Please provide a sample of an Investment Policy Statement the investment consultant has helped author for a public retirement system.

6. Please provide a sample of an Investment Management Agreement the investment consultant has helped author for a public retirement system.

7. Please share your experiences and views on working for and reporting to an ED and CIO of a retirement system.

J. This section shall be answered by the person(s) who would perform the role as the primary consultant for AJRS (if different than the primary consultant for APERS in Section I). Please answer the following questions as the primary consultant:

1. Please share your thoughts on the following comment: Regarding domestic equities it seems to be getting more challenging for active investment managers to outperform their benchmark indices. Should a domestic equity portfolio have more passive exposure? What percentage of a domestic equity portfolio should be active and what percentage should be passive?
2. Please share your thought on the following: Regarding small cap value in the U.S. markets, is private equity a substitute, a compliment, or neither to small cap value?
3. How quickly after quarter-end can you provide quarterly reports to AJRS? AJRS currently receives three reports from the current consultant. An executive Summary, and Board report, and a staff report. What can the CIO expect from the investment consultant?
4. The RFQ is for a public markets investment consultant. Would the CIO still have access to the investment consultant's private markets data, information, and reports?
5. Please provide a sample of an Investment Policy Statement the investment consultant has helped author for a public retirement system.
6. Please provide a sample of an Investment Management Agreement the investment consultant has helped author for a public retirement system.
7. Please share your experiences and views on working for and reporting to an ED and CIO of a retirement system.

K. Fee Proposal

Please provide a fee quote for the services requested.

Year 1 fee:

Year 2 fee:

Year 3 fee:

Year 4 fee:

Appendix B - APERS Investment Managers

Domestic Equity

Large Cap Growth	CastleArk All Cap CastleArk Large Cap Growth William Blair Large Cap Growth Beta – Mellon Large Cap Growth Index
Large Cap Core	Horrell Investment Management Beta – Mellon S&P 500 Index
Large Cap Value	Boston Partners Wellington Capital Beta – Mellon Large Cap Value Index
Mid Cap Growth	Stephens Investment Management
Small Cap Growth	Stephens Investment Management
Small Cap Value	LSV

Core Fixed Income

MacKay Shields
DoubleLine
PGIM

International Equity

As of Aug. 30, 2025

Beta – Mellon ACWI xUS
Lazard International
Artisan
Baillie Gifford
Acadian

Appendix C - AJRS Investment Managers

Domestic Equity

Boston Partners
Aristotle Boston
Beta – Mellon Large Cap Growth

International Equity

CC&L
Beta – Mellon ACWI xUS

Credit Markets

MacKay Shields Core Plus

Real Estate

INVESCO Core



Department of Shared Administrative Services

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Secretary Leslie Fiskien

COMBINED CERTIFICATIONS FOR CONTRACTING WITH THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

Pursuant to Arkansas law, a vendor must certify as specified below and as designated by the applicable laws.

1. **Israel Boycott Restriction:** For contracts valued at \$1,000 or greater.
A public entity shall not contract with a person or company (the "Contractor") unless the Contractor certifies in writing that the Contractor is not currently engaged in a boycott of Israel. If at any time after signing this certification the Contractor decides to boycott Israel, the Contractor must notify the contracting public entity in writing. See Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-1-503.
2. **Illegal Immigrant Restriction:** For contracts valued at \$25,000 or greater.
No state agency may contract for services with a Contractor who knowingly employs or contracts with an illegal immigrant. The Contractor shall certify that it does not knowingly employ, or contract with, illegal immigrants. See Arkansas Code Annotated § 19-60-105.
3. **Energy, Fossil Fuel, Firearms, and Ammunition Industries Boycott Restriction:** For contracts valued at \$75,000 or greater.
A public entity shall not contract unless the contract includes a written certification that the Contractor is not currently engaged in and agrees not to engage in, a boycott of an Energy, Fossil Fuel, Firearms, or Ammunition Industry for the duration of the contract. See Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-1-1102.
4. **Scrutinized Company Restriction:** Required with bid or proposal submission.
A state agency shall not contract with a Scrutinized Company or a company that employs a Scrutinized Company as a subcontractor. A Scrutinized Company is a company owned in whole or with a majority ownership by the government of the People's Republic of China. A state agency shall require a company that submits a bid or proposal for a contract to certify that it is not a Scrutinized Company and does not employ a Scrutinized Company as a subcontractor. See Arkansas Code Annotated § 25-1-1203.

By signing this form, the Contractor agrees and certifies they are in compliance with the certification requirements listed above that are relevant to the contractor's performance under the resulting contract and will remain so for the aggregate term of any resultant contract. Additionally, the Contractor agrees and certifies they shall comply with all Arkansas laws applicable to the contractor's performance under the resulting contract.

Contract Number: _____ Description: _____

Department Name: _____

Vendor Number: _____ Vendor Name: _____

Vendor Signature

Date