

Request for Proposal for Financial Advisor Services

The Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, Inc. (SMRLA) is seeking proposals to provide investment advisor (asset management) services for a growing portfolio of post-employment benefit accounts. SMRLA is a 501c3 nonprofit organization.

SMRLA offers employees access to a 403b plan which is administered by TIAA-CREF. SMRLA also offers employees access to a retiree-only health reimbursement account (RHRA).

SMRLA is governed by a nine-member Board of Trustees that has policy making and fiduciary responsibilities for SMRLA.

Instructions & Expectations

1. Please answer the questions and required items in the order presented in the RFP. This will help SMRLA expedite the review process.
2. SMRLA reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all proposals to assist in the evaluation process. All representations, including fees, made by the proposer must be in effect for a minimum of 120 days.
3. The following services identified by SMRLA in this RFP represent the minimum expectations and roles of applicant firms.
4. Please keep your responses relevant to the question being answered, and written so that the information presented can be clearly interpreted and easily understood.
5. Applicants should submit one paper copy and one electronic copy of their proposal to:

Southern Maryland Regional Library Association

c/o Ashley Teagle, CEO

P.O. Box 459

Charlotte Hall, MD 20622

ateagle@somd.lib.md.us

6. Submission Deadline: Monday, January 31, 2022 by 4:30 p.m.

Explanation of Recent SMRLA Investment History & Current Needs

SMRLA established a 403b plan for employees with TIAA-CREF in 2001. A variety of staff members have participated over the years and SMRLA would like professional support in reviewing the investment options available to staff members in order to fulfill the Board's fiduciary responsibilities. The plan has assets totaling \$1,502,316.04 in employer and employee contributions.

SMRLA established a retiree health reimbursement account (RHRA) in 2019. This plan is a post-employment benefit available to any retiring SMRLA employee who meets the eligibility requirements of age 48 and has 30 years of service or age 62 and has 20 years of service. Retired employees will receive \$12,000 per year in reimbursement for medical expenses with an annual 3% increase to the benefit. The RHRA is a trust that is currently invested in a preservation of

capital fund. An actuarial study is done every two years to provide an accurate assessment of how much funding the plan requires in order to meet current and projected obligations. This account requires management by the financial advisor. The trust currently has assets totaling \$396,623 in employer contributions.

Additionally, SMRLA seeks professional guidance in developing an investment policy. The investment policy will provide guidance to SMRLA's Board of Trustees and will outline the organization's procedures for overseeing investment accounts.

Proposal Format & Guidelines

Objectives

The Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, Inc. invites proposals to help the organization meet the following objectives:

1. Reasonable and competitive fees for investment management services

RHRA

2. Achieve investment results that safeguard and grow SMRLA's RHRA assets
3. Evaluate and recommend investment options available to SMRLA to assist the board in carrying out their fiduciary responsibilities
4. Provide a periodic analysis of selected funds' performance against established indices and peer comparisons
5. Offer periodic meetings and presentations with SMRLA's Board of Trustees; Board Treasurer; and / or staff

403b

6. Review available investments to ensure employees have sufficient alternatives with reasonable opportunity and sufficient communications. Ensure compliance with federal guidelines
7. Provide assistance in reviewing and analyzing financial reports from TIAA-CREF electronically and in-person along with an accompanying written report as needed
8. Receive assistance and recommendations in the development of an investment policy, as well as periodic review and revision of the investment policy

Your Firm & Services

1. An overview of your firm and its approach to providing services to SMRLA
2. Point of contact information
3. Proposed client manager information and bio or resume
4. Provide a brief description of your organization and its history

Relationships

1. What is the average client relationship length with your firm?

2. Please provide a list of at least three (3) clients for whom you have performed similar work as described in this proposal. We will only check references for finalists.
3. Provide information as to how your firm avoids conflict of interest situations, especially regarding, but not limited to, fiduciary responsibilities.

Fee Structure, Meetings & Disclosure

1. Do you have a minimum fee?
2. State whether your fees include presenting to SMRLA's Board of Trustees periodically and other meetings as needed. Please indicate the maximum number of meetings included.
3. Indicate whether these fees are all-inclusive or whether additional expenses may be incurred for each service (i.e. travel, etc.)

Advisor Services

1. Describe the services provided by your firm, including specialized services for nonprofit 501c3 organizations.

Reporting

1. Can you produce customized investment performance evaluation reports for RHRA?
2. Can this be done electronically? Can client account information be accessed online?
3. How many business days after the end of the reporting period are performance reports available?
4. Is the overall RHRA portfolio performance shown net of fees?

Investment Process & Strategies

1. Briefly describe the approach, the process and the tools your firm would use to assist SMRLA in strategic investment planning.
2. Describe how benchmarks are chosen or developed, and how performance is compared to similar portfolios.

Insurance, Liability, Licenses & Compliance

1. Describe the levels of coverage for fiduciary and professional liability insurance, errors and omissions, and insurance for SEC-required (17g-1) fidelity bonds your firm carries. List the insurance carriers supplying coverage.
2. Is the coverage on a per client basis or is the dollar figure applied to the firm as a whole?
3. Is your firm a registered investment advisor with the SEC under the Investment Advisors Act of 1940? Provide a copy of your ADV form, parts 1 and 2.
4. Is your firm registered with the SEC or a state securities regulator as an investment advisor? Are you properly licensed and credentialed to provide the services as described in this RFP?

Additional / Other Information

1. What do you consider your company's key differences and unique "value-added" selling points that set you apart from your competition?