



RFP: Research Consultant

The American Association of University Professors (“AAUP”) invites well-qualified professional(s) (also referred to as “consultant” herein) to submit proposals for research consultancy services as described in the scope of services below. Proposals will be accepted from both individuals and firms, although in the latter case it is expected that the proposal will identify individual(s) to work with the AAUP. It is anticipated that the consultancy will start on or about December 1 and last through April 30. During the months of December and January we anticipate that the consultant will provide approximately 25-40 hours a week of services, except for the week of December 24-31, when we anticipate a total of about five hours; during the months of February and March we anticipate approximately 40 hours a week, which can be provided by one or more individuals; and during April we anticipate approximately 40 hours total, mostly at the beginning of the month. The consultant will report to the AAUP Director of External Relations.

Organization Background

The AAUP is a nonprofit membership association of faculty and other academic professionals. Headquartered in Washington, DC, we have members and chapters based at colleges and universities across the country.

Since our foundation in 1915, the AAUP has helped to shape American higher education by developing the standards and procedures that maintain quality in education and academic freedom in this country's colleges and universities. We define fundamental professional values and standards for higher education, advance the rights of academics, particularly as those rights pertain to academic freedom and shared governance, and promote the interests of higher education teaching and research. The AAUP has approximately thirty-two staff members.

The AAUP's research program promotes the economic security of the profession through advanced research on higher education. A major project is the annual Faculty Compensation Survey (FCS), a national survey with approximately 1,000 participating institutions, covering more than 425,000 full-time faculty.

Prior survey reports are available at <https://www.aaup.org/our-work/research/annual-report-economic-status-profession>.

Services Objective

The AAUP is seeking an individual or firm who can provide research consultancy services primarily to lead and oversee the AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey, including collecting, validating, and analyzing data, as described in the scope of services and survey timeline below. The consultant will work with an AAUP staff research assistant, who handles e-mail reminders to participants, triages and fields many incoming emails and phone calls, and handles the data purchasing process.

Scope of Services

- Responsibility for the Faculty Compensation Survey process: collecting, validating, and analyzing FCS data from institutions.
- Collaboration with an outside software developer to maintain and update custom software interface for submitting, checking, and validating FCS data.
- Collaboration with AAUP staff research assistant in communicating with survey respondents, both through e-mail and by phone. Answering technical questions that cannot be fielded by research assistant, or consulting with her on answers.
- Ensuring that data submitted are reviewed and checked for errors and inconsistencies; assisting respondents in making corrections. Production of look-ahead reports. Look-ahead reports consist of the following items sent to institutions and systems who submit data by the deadline: Average Salary and compensation by rank, Gender Equity by rank, Average Benefits as a Percent of Salary, Distribution of Faculty by Rank, and Continuing Faculty Salary Increments by Rank.
- Analysis of FCS data for an early April release. This includes: production of 10-15 survey report tables and 10-15 additional tables and figures for inclusion in the release; production of Appendices I and II with institutional listings and of a new Appendix III listing salary and benefits information for part-time faculty and graduate employees, and production of R tidy datasets. Analysis is done in R.
- Delivery of data files to *Inside Higher Ed*, assisting IHE staff with questions about the files or data
- Assisting with media release of survey results, highlighting key points of the survey findings. Assisting AAUP staff in responding to inquiries from media representatives.
- Writing the “Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession,” likely in collaboration with a member report editor/author.
- Consulting with AAUP staff about requests for additional custom data reports and, with approval, creating these reports.

Survey Timeline

October 29, 2018: Survey opens

February 22, 2019: Survey closes

March 4-8, 2019: Look-ahead reports are produced and sent to participants

March 11-15: Data validation and cleaning

March 18-29: Production of data products (tables, figures, and appendices)

March 22: Inside Higher Ed Data file due

April 1-5: Preparation of media release and materials for online publication

April 10: “Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession” due

Schedule for Proposals

Initial proposals will be reviewed starting on November 26, 2018. Initial proposals selected as finalists can be revised and refined after candidates sign a confidentiality agreement and engage in further discussion with AAUP staff.

Initial Proposal Requirements

To receive consideration, initial proposals must include the following and be submitted to AAUP External Relations Director Gwendolyn Bradley at gbradley@aaup.org.

Letter of Transmittal: Please include a brief introduction summarizing your understanding of the work to be performed and a rough estimate or range of the proposed cost, which can be revised in the formal proposal. Also, include a brief description of your business including the address from which services will be provided and contact information for questions and follow-up.

Business Profile: Please provide a brief history of your business. State whether your business is local, national or international and provide staff size.

Identify any qualities you believe make your business well suited to this project. Please highlight:

- Any work you have done with similar organizations or projects.
- Ability to use advanced statistical software to produce analyses of higher education data from a variety of sources. Experience in data analysis and report generation using advanced statistical software. Expertise in R.
- Education and other credentials of consultant(s), especially training in social sciences, economics, higher education, or quantitative methods.
- Experience managing a large data consortium or research study.
- Demonstrated written and oral communication ability.
- Familiarity with US Department of Education postsecondary databases, particularly IPEDS.
- Familiarity with the AAUP Faculty Compensation Survey.
- Familiarity with professional associations, higher education, or labor unions.

Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals should be submitted by email to gbradley@aaup.org.

1. Proposals should include a cover letter containing the name of the proposing individual/firm, the name(s) of the professional(s) proposed to provide direct service for the duration of the project, e-mail address, postal address, and telephone number.
2. Proposals should include a narrative that speaks to the Evaluation Criteria outlined below and cost to accomplish the Scope of Services outlined above.
3. Proposals must clearly outline the responsibilities both of the AAUP and the selected firm. ALL costs payable by the AAUP for these services must be clearly defined.
4. Proposals should include the resume(s) of the professional (s) who will provide direct service for this project.
5. Proposals should include the name, contact person, title, telephone number, and email addresses of three references for similar projects, as well as a brief description of each project.

By submitting a proposal, the consultant authorizes AAUP to contact references to evaluate consultant's qualifications for this project.

Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following key criteria:

- Performance capability—the extent to which the proposal demonstrates ability to provide the depth and breadth of experience, skills, knowledge and competence generally required by this project
- Completeness and quality of response—the thoroughness and concern for quality in your response
- Understanding of and commitment to the mission and strategic objectives of the AAUP.
- Budget

Interviews

Top-rated candidates may be invited for a personal interview.

Contract Award

AAUP plans to select the best qualified consultant by early December, 2018. The selected firm and AAUP will then mutually discuss and refine the scope of work for the project and shall negotiate final conditions, compensation and performance schedule for the subsequent contract to be executed.

For More Information

For questions about this RFP, please contact Gwendolyn Bradley at gbradley@aaup.org.

Women and candidates of color are encouraged to apply. AAUP is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, disability, race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, personal appearance, family responsibilities, genetic information, matriculation, political affiliation, or other characteristics unrelated to professional performance.