

# NORTHERN KENTUCKY AREA DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (NKADD)

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL AND COMPLIANCE AUDITING SERVICES

Fiscal Years 2027, 2028, and 2029

With Optional Two (2) One-Year Renewals

Issued By

Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD)

22 Spiral Drive Florence, Kentucky 41042

Phone: (859) 283-1885

Website: [www.nkadd.org](http://www.nkadd.org)

RFP Number:

NKADD-AUDIT-2027-01

Release Date: June 23, 2026

Questions Due: July 3, 2026, 5:00 pm ET

Proposal Due Date: July 13, 2026, 5:00 pm ET

NKADD Contact: Chris Courtney, Associate Director of Local Government Services

Email: [lgs@nkadd.org](mailto:lgs@nkadd.org)

Phone: 859-283-1885

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### 1. ADVERTISEMENT FOR PROPOSALS

#### COOPERATIVE PURCHASING NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) is requesting sealed proposals from qualified Certified Public Accounting firms to provide independent financial and compliance auditing services to those eligible public agencies who intend to use this cooperative contract for fiscal years ending June 30, 2027, June 30, 2028, and June 30, 2029, with optional renewals for two (2) additional one-year periods. Awarded contractors will be required to support cooperative purchasing participation, provide sales reporting, and remit the administrative fee described in this solicitation. Proposers should carefully review Exhibit A – Cooperative Contract Requirements and Administrative Fee Provisions.

The selected firm shall perform audits in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS), Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS), Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F), Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) 91A.040, 424.220, 424.120, and

65.905, and all other applicable federal, state, and local requirements. The audits will include financial statement audits and, where applicable, Single Audit procedures related to federal awards.

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**Release Date:** June 23, 2026

**Questions Due:** July 3, 2026, 5:00 PM ET

**Proposal Due Date:** July 13, 2026, 5:00 PM ET

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to the designated NKADD contact person, Chris Courtney, Associate Director of Local Government Services, via email only at [lgs@nkadd.org](mailto:lgs@nkadd.org) no later than **July 3, 2026, at 5:00 PM ET**. Responses to questions will be posted on the NKADD website.

Complete proposal specifications may be obtained from the Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) office located at 22 Spiral Drive, Florence, Kentucky 41042, or downloaded from the NKADD website.

### **Submission Requirements**

All proposals shall be clearly identified as: "**PROPOSAL – NKADD INDEPENDENT AUDITING SERVICES" RFP NO. NKADD-AUDIT-2027-01**

Proposals may be submitted either in hard copy or electronically. Hard-copy proposals shall be delivered to:

Northern Kentucky Area Development District

ATTN: Chris Courtney

22 Spiral Drive

Florence, KY 41042

Electronic proposals may be submitted via email in PDF format to:

[lgs@nkadd.org](mailto:lgs@nkadd.org)

The subject line of emailed proposals shall state:

**"Proposal Submission – NKADD Independent Auditing Services – RFP No. NKADD-AUDIT-2027-01"**

Proposals must be received by NKADD no later than **July 13, 2026, at 5:00 PM ET**. For electronic submissions, the timestamp of the receiving email system shall determine timeliness. It is the responsibility of the proposer to ensure that its proposal is received

prior to the submission deadline. Late proposals, regardless of delivery method, will not be considered. NKADD reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive informalities and irregularities, request clarifications, negotiate with qualified firms, and accept the proposal deemed to be in the best interest of NKADD members.

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

### Purpose

The Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) is issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP) to establish one or more competitively awarded cooperative contracts with qualified Certified Public Accounting firms capable of providing auditing, attestation, compliance, and related financial services to NKADD and other eligible participating agencies.

Recent changes to Kentucky law, increasing financial reporting requirements, and ongoing capacity constraints within the auditing profession have created challenges for many public agencies seeking timely, affordable, and qualified audit services. These challenges are particularly significant for smaller municipalities, utilities, special districts, and other organizations with limited administrative resources.

Through this solicitation, NKADD seeks to establish a cooperative contracting vehicle that provides participating agencies with access to experienced audit firms capable of delivering professional services in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local requirements. Eligible participating agencies may include municipalities, counties, Area Development Districts, utilities, special districts, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, and other public entities authorized to utilize cooperative purchasing contracts.

The resulting contract is intended to serve as a readily available procurement resource that allows participating agencies to obtain qualified auditing and financial compliance services through a competitively solicited contract, reducing administrative burden while supporting transparency, accountability, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

## Cooperative Contract Intent

This Request for Proposals is being conducted to establish a competitively solicited cooperative contract that may be utilized by NKADD members and other eligible participating agencies.

The resulting agreement is intended to function as a Master Cooperative Contract. The awarded contractor may provide services to additional public agencies beyond the membership of NKADD that elect to participate through the cooperative purchasing program.

By submitting a proposal, the proposer acknowledges and agrees that:

- The resulting contract may be used by other eligible participating agencies under the same or substantially similar terms and pricing.
- The awarded contractor's customer base may extend beyond NKADD membership.
- Participating agencies will contract directly with the awarded contractor for services performed.
- Participating agencies may negotiate agency-specific administrative or operational provisions that do not materially alter the competitively awarded scope, pricing structure, or cooperative purchasing framework.
- Administrative fees, sales reporting requirements, and cooperative participation requirements described in Exhibit A shall apply to all sales made through the resulting cooperative contract.

The intent of this solicitation is to create a contract vehicle that delivers value to members of NKADD and to any participating public agencies while expanding opportunities for awarded contractors.

## Term of Engagement

NKADD intends to enter into an agreement for an initial term covering fiscal years 2027, 2028, and 2029, with the option to renew for two (2) additional one-year periods upon mutual written agreement.

## Questions and Addenda

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing to Chris Courtney. Responses and any addenda issued by NKADD shall become part of this solicitation. Only written addenda issued by NKADD shall be considered official.

### 3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The awarded contractor(s) shall provide professional auditing, attestation, compliance, and related financial services necessary to assist Participating Agencies in meeting applicable federal, state, and local financial reporting, audit, and compliance requirements.

Services may be requested on an as-needed basis and may vary based on the size, complexity, funding sources, organizational structure, and statutory requirements of each Participating Agency.

#### **Core Services**

Services may include, but are not limited to:

- Department for Local Government (DLG) financial compliance requirements
- Annual financial statement audits
- Biennial audits
- Single Audits under Uniform Guidance
- Federal compliance audits
- State compliance audits in accordance with KRS 91A.040, 424.220 and 424.120
- Agreed-Upon Procedures (AUP) engagements
- Attestation engagements
- Internal control reviews
- Financial statement preparation assistance, where permitted
- Management letters and recommendations
- Grant compliance reviews
- Utility system audits
- Pension and OPEB reporting assistance
- Financial reporting assistance
- Other related auditing and compliance services

#### **Service Requirements**

The awarded contractor(s) shall be capable of:

1. Auditing financial statements and expressing opinions in accordance with applicable professional standards.
2. Performing audits in accordance with GAAS, GAGAS, Uniform Guidance, applicable Kentucky statutes, and other applicable requirements.
3. Conducting Single Audits and federal compliance testing when required.
4. Evaluating internal controls and financial management practices.
5. Preparing required reports, findings, schedules, and communications.
6. Presenting audit results and recommendations to governing bodies and management.
7. Assisting agencies with required regulatory and grant reporting submissions.
8. Maintaining work papers and documentation in accordance with professional standards.
9. Providing services through on-site, remote, or hybrid delivery models.

### **Optional Related Services**

Participating Agencies may also request related professional services, subject to applicable independence requirements, including:

- Technical accounting guidance
- GASB implementation assistance
- Internal control consulting
- Financial policy development
- Audit readiness assessments
- Staff training and educational services
- Corrective action plan assistance
- Other mutually agreed accounting, auditing, or financial consulting services

Any non-audit services shall comply with applicable independence requirements under GAAS, GAGAS, Uniform Guidance, and AICPA standards.

## 4. AUDITING STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

The audit shall be performed in accordance with:

- Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS)
- Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the US
- Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F)
- Single Audit Act
- KRS 91A.040, 424.220 and 424.120 and all other applicable Kentucky statutes and regulations
- Applicable federal agency requirements

The auditor shall comply with all applicable AICPA professional standards.

### Independence

The firm must provide an affirmative statement that it is independent of NKADD in accordance with professional standards.

### Licensing Requirements

The firm and all assigned key personnel must be properly licensed to practice public accounting. The awarded contractor shall maintain all licenses, registrations, permits, and professional qualifications required to perform services under the resulting contract in the jurisdictions where services are provided. Audit reports shall be supervised and signed by individuals authorized to practice public accounting and perform governmental audit services as required by applicable law.

## 5. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

### Proposal Format

Proposals shall contain the following sections:

- Cover Letter
- Table of Contents
- Firm Qualifications and Experience
- Key Personnel Qualifications
- Audit Approach and Methodology
- References
- Pricing Proposal
- Completed Signature on Exhibit A

## Cover Letter

The cover letter shall:

- Identify the proposing firm
- Identify the authorized contact person
- State understanding of the engagement
- Affirm proposal validity for ninety (90) days
- Be signed by an authorized representative.
- The proposer shall include a statement acknowledging that it understands this solicitation is intended to establish a cooperative purchasing contract and acknowledge that, if awarded, it agrees to comply with all cooperative purchasing requirements, sales reporting requirements, and administrative fee obligations identified in Exhibit A.

## 5. TECHNICAL PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

### Firm Qualifications

The proposer shall describe:

- Firm history and size
- Experience with federal grants and Single Audits
- Governmental audit experience, including your firm's experience serving entities with populations under 5,000 and under 10,000, as well as larger entities. Include the number of such clients currently served.
- Describe the firm's capacity to provide services to participating agencies simultaneously, including:
  - Number of governmental audit clients currently served
  - Number of governmental audit professionals employed
  - Geographic areas served
  - Ability to serve communities of varying sizes and complexity of needs
  - Ability to perform both on-site and remote engagements
- The proposer shall provide a copy of its most recent external peer review report and any letter of comments issued in connection therewith.
- Provide at least three (3) governmental audit references including:
  - Organization name
  - Period of Performance
  - Contact person
  - Phone number

- Email address
- Scope of services provided.

### Key Personnel

- Identify the individual who will serve as the primary contact for participating agencies utilizing the cooperative contract and describe that individual's responsibilities for contract administration, responsiveness, and customer service, and provide his or her resume below.
- Describe the firm's ability to provide services in Kentucky, including any Kentucky office locations, Kentucky-licensed personnel, or other resources available to support participating agencies.
- As available at your firm, provide sample staffing resumes for:

Partner
Principal
Audit Manager
Senior Auditor
Staff Auditor
Specialist/Consultant

### Audit Approach

Please describe your Audit Approach and Methodology, including:

- Overall audit methodology
- Risk assessment procedures
- Internal control approach
- Federal and state compliance testing
- Communication procedures
- Quality control procedures
- Technology and remote audit capabilities.

## 6. COST PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

### Required Pricing Documents:

Because the resulting contract is intended for use by multiple governmental entities of varying sizes and complexity, proposers shall provide pricing information sufficient to allow Participating Agencies to obtain audit and related financial services under the resulting cooperative contract.

Pricing should be designed to accommodate a broad range of governmental entities, including small municipalities, counties, special districts, utilities, Area Development Districts, and other public agencies.

Participating Agencies may request project-specific quotes under the resulting contract based on their individual audit, attestation, compliance, or consulting requirements. Such quotes shall be derived from the pricing structure proposed and accepted under this solicitation.

**Required Pricing Information**

Proposers shall provide:

Staff Classification	Hourly Rate
Partner	\$
Principal	\$
Audit Manager	\$
Senior Auditor	\$
Staff Auditor	\$
Specialist/Consultant	\$

Provide estimated fee ranges for the following engagement types, if applicable:

Service Type	Typical Fee Range
Municipal Audit (Small Entity)	\$_____ - \$_____
Municipal Audit (Medium Entity)	\$_____ - \$_____
County Audit	\$_____ - \$_____
Utility District Audit	\$_____ - \$_____
Special District Audit	\$_____ - \$_____
Area Development District Audit	\$_____ - \$_____
Single Audit Add-On	\$_____ - \$_____
Agreed-Upon Procedures Engagement	\$_____ - \$_____
Attestation Engagement	\$_____ - \$_____

Minimum Audit Engagement Fee	\$ _____
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#### 4. Travel and Expenses

State whether travel costs are included in proposed rates or identify any separately reimbursable expenses.

#### 6. Minimum Engagement Requirements

Identify any minimum fees, minimum engagement sizes, geographic limitations, or service restrictions that may apply.

Provide:

- Annual all-inclusive audit fee
- Single Audit pricing, if applicable
- Optional renewal year pricing
- Hourly rates for additional services
- Estimated hours by personnel classification.

#### Pricing Requirements

Pricing shall:

- Include all travel and expenses
- Be fixed and all-inclusive
- Remain firm for the proposal validity period.

## 7. EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criteria	Maximum Points
Firm Qualifications and Experience	25
Key Personnel Qualifications	20
Technical Approach and Methodology	20
Cost Proposal	20
Capacity, Coverage and Ability to Service Agencies	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

## Interviews

NKADD reserves the right to conduct interviews or presentations.

## 8. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### Exhibit A

Cooperative Contract Requirements, Administrative Fee Provisions, Sales Reporting Requirements, and Participating Agency Terms are incorporated by reference in this solicitation and any resulting contract. Submission of a proposal constitutes acceptance of Exhibit A requirements unless specifically identified as exceptions in the proposal.

### Addenda

Any interpretation, correction, or modification of the RFP shall be made by written addendum issued by NKADD.

### Proposal Validity

All proposals shall remain valid for ninety (90) days.

### Independent Price Determination

By submitting a proposal, the proposer certifies that pricing has been independently determined without collusion.

### Public Records

All proposals submitted become the property of NKADD and may be subject to disclosure under the Kentucky Open Records Act.

### Contract Type

The resulting agreement shall be a fixed-price professional services contract.

### Transfer of Contract

The selected firm shall not assign or transfer the contract without prior written approval from NKADD.

### Contract Termination

NKADD may terminate the contract:

- For cause
- For non-performance
- For convenience upon thirty (30) days' written notice.

#### Non-Performance

Failure to comply with contract requirements may result in cancellation of the agreement.

#### Conflict of Interest

The proposer shall disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

#### Confidentiality

The auditor shall maintain confidentiality of all non-public information.

#### Compliance with Laws

The auditor shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

#### Equal Opportunity

The proposer shall comply with all nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requirements.

#### Suspension and Debarment

The proposer certifies that neither the firm nor its principals are suspended or debarred.

#### Records Retention

The auditor shall maintain records and work papers for the period required by law and professional standards.

#### Insurance

The selected firm shall maintain all required insurance coverage.

#### Entire Agreement

The final contract shall constitute the complete agreement between the parties.

#### Governing Law

The contract shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

## 9. EXHIBIT A

### EXHIBIT A

#### **COOPERATIVE CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS, ADMINISTRATIVE FEE PROVISIONS, SALES REPORTING REQUIREMENTS, AND PARTICIPATING AGENCY TERMS**

#### **Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) Cooperative Purchasing Program**

The Northern Kentucky Area Development District (NKADD) serves as a regional cooperative purchasing organization for the benefit of its member governments and other

eligible public agencies. Through cooperative procurement, participating entities may leverage competitively solicited contracts to obtain high-quality audit, accounting, financial consulting, and related professional services while reducing administrative costs and procurement burdens.

The NKADD Cooperative Purchasing Program is intended to provide eligible Participating Agencies with access to qualified service providers under competitively awarded contracts that may be utilized by local governments, public agencies, educational institutions, special districts, nonprofit organizations, and other entities authorized to participate in cooperative purchasing programs.

### **Administrative Services Provider**

The resulting Master Cooperative Contract(s) awarded under this solicitation will be administered by NKADD in partnership with Bespoke Community Cooperatives, LLC ("Bespoke").

Bespoke serves as the administrative operating services provider supporting cooperative purchasing activities, contract administration, participating agency enrollment, supplier reporting, and related cooperative program functions. NKADD utilizes Bespoke's services to facilitate the cooperative nature of this solicitation and to maximize the value of the resulting contract for Participating Agencies and awarded contractors.

### **Cooperative Procurement and Participating Agencies**

This solicitation is being conducted by NKADD as the Lead Procurement Agency (LPA). The resulting Master Cooperative Contract may be utilized by NKADD member governments and other eligible Participating Agencies ("PAs") including, but not limited to:

- Cities and municipalities
- Counties
- Area Development Districts
- Special districts
- Utility systems
- Transit agencies
- Public authorities
- Educational institutions
- Housing agencies

- Nonprofit organizations
- Economic development organizations
- Quasi-governmental entities
- Other public agencies authorized by law to participate in cooperative purchasing programs

Participating Agencies may utilize the resulting contract under the same general terms, conditions, pricing structure, and administrative fee requirements established through this solicitation.

## **Participating Agency Contracting Authority**

### **1. Cooperative Purchasing**

This solicitation is being conducted by NKADD on behalf of its members and other eligible Participating Agencies. The resulting contract is intended to function as a cooperative purchasing contract available to Participating Agencies that elect to utilize the awarded contract.

### **2. Use of the Contract by Participating Agencies**

Agencies wishing to utilize the resulting contract may register as Participating Agencies through the Bespoke cooperative purchasing program and may execute participating agreements, purchase orders, engagement letters, or other mutually acceptable contracting documents directly with the awarded contractor.

Neither NKADD nor Bespoke will be a party to individual agency engagements.

### **3. Agency-Specific Terms**

Participating Agencies may negotiate mutually agreed upon administrative provisions, engagement schedules, reporting requirements, audit timelines, and agency-specific requirements that do not materially alter the competitively awarded scope, pricing methodology, or cooperative purchasing framework established through this solicitation.

### **4. Direct Contracting Relationship**

All audit engagements, financial consulting assignments, invoices, payments, scheduling activities, reports, and related services shall be conducted directly between the Participating Agency and the awarded contractor.

NKADD and Bespoke shall not be responsible for agency-specific procurement actions, purchase orders, engagement letters, invoices, payments, disputes, or project administration activities.

## **5. Procurement Compliance**

Each Participating Agency is responsible for determining its eligibility to utilize the resulting contract and for ensuring compliance with all laws, regulations, policies, and procurement requirements applicable to that agency.

### **Participating Agency Responsibilities**

Participating Agencies utilizing the resulting cooperative contract shall be responsible for providing reasonable access to records, personnel, facilities, systems, and information necessary for the successful completion of the requested services. To the extent applicable to a particular engagement, Participating Agencies may provide information and documentation including, but not limited to:

- Prior audit reports, audit findings, and management letters;
- Annual financial statements and supporting schedules;
- General ledger, trial balances, and accounting records;
- Budget documents and financial forecasts;
- Debt schedules, bond documents, and related agreements;
- Grant agreements, grant expenditure records, and compliance documentation;
- Internal control policies, procedures, and related documentation;
- Board, council, commission, authority, or committee meeting minutes;
- Bank statements, reconciliations, investment records, and supporting financial documentation;
- Payroll records, personnel-related financial records, and benefit information as applicable;
- Federal, state, and local filings, reports, and regulatory submissions; and
- Other records, documentation, and information reasonably necessary to perform the requested services.

Participating Agencies shall designate a primary point of contact authorized to coordinate requests for information, facilitate communications, schedule meetings, and assist with the administration of the engagement.

Depending upon the nature of the engagement, services may be performed on-site, remotely, or through a hybrid approach. When on-site services are requested or required, Participating Agencies shall provide reasonable access to facilities, records, systems, and personnel necessary for performance of the services. Specific workspace, technology access, security requirements, scheduling, and logistical arrangements shall be coordinated directly between the Participating Agency and the awarded contractor.

Participating Agencies shall remain responsible for the accuracy and completeness of information, records, and documentation provided to the awarded contractor. Nothing herein shall relieve the awarded contractor of its professional responsibilities, applicable auditing standards, or obligations under the resulting contract.

**Geographic Service Area**

NKADD intends for the resulting cooperative contract to be available throughout Kentucky and may also be utilized by eligible public agencies located outside of NKADD's geographic service area where authorized by law.

Proposers are encouraged to identify the geographic areas in which they are willing and able to provide audit, accounting, financial consulting, and related professional services under the resulting contract.

**Service Areas Offered:**

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**Administrative Fee**

By submitting a proposal, the proposer acknowledges and agrees that any awarded contractor shall pay an Administrative Fee equal to two percent (2.0%) of all sales made through the resulting cooperative contract to NKADD member agencies and Participating Agencies.

Administrative fees shall only apply to services procured through the resulting cooperative contract.

Administrative fee payments shall be remitted to NKADD through Bespoke Community Cooperatives, LLC, acting as NKADD's administrative services provider. Bespoke may collect, process, and administer administrative fee payments on behalf of NKADD pursuant to its agreement with NKADD. Administrative fees remain payable to NKADD regardless of the entity designated to receive or process such payments.

**INITIAL HERE:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Benefits of Participation**

In consideration for the Administrative Fee, awarded contractors may receive:

- Access to NKADD member governments and Participating Agencies
- Cooperative contract marketing and promotional support
- Participation in cooperative purchasing outreach activities
- Contract utilization reporting and market visibility opportunities
- Assistance with Participating Agency engagement and contract awareness efforts

### **Monthly Sales Reporting Requirements**

Awarded contractors shall provide monthly sales reports to NKADD. NKADD may designate Bespoke Community Cooperatives, LLC, acting as NKADD's administrative services provider, to receive, collect, review, and administer such reports on NKADD's behalf.

Reports shall include:

- Participating Agency name
- Engagement or service description
- Invoice date
- Invoice amount
- Total sales amount
- Administrative fee due

Reports shall be submitted no later than the fifteenth (15th) day of the month following the reporting period using the format designated by NKADD. NKADD may require submission through Bespoke Community Cooperatives, LLC, acting on NKADD's behalf. Failure to

submit required reports or remit administrative fees may constitute grounds for contract termination.

Contractors shall maintain records supporting all engagements, invoices, reports, and administrative fee calculations for a minimum period of five (5) years following expiration or termination of the contract.

**INITIAL HERE:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Audit and Inspection of Records**

NKADD reserves the right to audit or cause to be audited by a designated third party, records necessary to verify contract utilization, sales reporting, and administrative fee compliance.

The awarded contractor shall permit NKADD, Participating Agencies, Bespoke, and authorized governmental representatives to inspect, audit, review, copy, and examine records directly related to services provided under the resulting contract.

This right shall survive expiration or termination of the contract for a period of five (5) years, or longer if required by applicable law, audit requirements, or pending litigation.

**INITIAL HERE:** \_\_\_\_\_