



Request for Proposals

*US Small-Mid Cap (SMID) Equity (long only)
Strategy*

Firefighters' Retirement System (Louisiana)

Blackout Period: Other than the RFP response itself and questions allowed according to the RFP document, any further marketing communication related to this search with FRS board members or staff is strictly prohibited from August 21, 2025 until after selection of the finalist. Any violation of this standard may be grounds for elimination from the search.

SECTION I: OVERVIEW

The Firefighters' Retirement System ("FRS" or "System") is soliciting proposals from US Small-Mid Cap (SMID) Equity (long only) strategies, the passive benchmark for which is the Russell 2500 Index or an appropriate SMID Equity style benchmark. The System's total allocation to the selected manager will be approximately \$60 million. **Firefighters' Retirement System hereby reserves the right to: 1) Reject any and all proposals, 2) Waive minor irregularities in any proposal, 3) Request clarification of information submitted, and 4) Request additional information from any proposer, 5) Deviate from proposed timeline, and 6) Discontinue the RFP in whole or in part.**

A. Overview of the Funds

FRS is a cost sharing, multiple-employer, governmental defined pension plan that provides retirement, disability, and survivor benefits for over 6,000 members employed by 147 different cities, parishes, and fire protection districts. Created on January 1, 1980, the System now has approximately \$2.7 billion in investment assets. receives approximately \$160 million in annual contributions from state appropriations, employees and employers annually, and pays approximately \$150 million in annual benefits.

B. Scope of Services

FRS is seeking a firm to provide investment management services in a US SMID Equity (long only) Strategy. The services sought include:

1. Discretionary investment of plan assets
2. Discharge of duties solely in the interest of the plan's participants and beneficiaries
3. Compliance with all board policies including the investment policy statement as adopted
4. Attend board meetings if requested by the FRS Board of Trustees
5. Provide on-going education to trustees and staff if requested

SECTION II: MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

At the time of submission of the proposal, the submitting proposer must provide a written cover letter (a template for which is provided in Section V) from its presiding officer confirming that the respondent meets all of the minimum criteria set forth below. If your firm does not meet all of the criteria, the proposal may not be considered. In addition to confirming that all of the minimum criteria are met, please disclose any campaign contributions and/or contractual business the firm or any employee of the firm may have with any FRS trustee or staff member. If you have nothing to disclose, please state that also.

Please provide an electronic signed copy of the cover letter (a template for which is provided in Section V) to FRS staff at the email addresses below. In addition, please provide one electronic signed copy of the cover letter to David Barnes and Will DuPree at the email addresses below. Cover letters must be received by the deadline established in Section III. Any cover letters received after the deadline may have their responses eliminated from consideration.

Michael Becker and Daniel Loper
Subject: FRS US SMID Equity Search
Email: mbecker@lafirs.org
Email: dloper@lafirs.org
Phone: (225) 925-4060

David Barnes and Will DuPree
Subject: FRS US SMID Equity Search
Email: dbarnes@nepc.com
Email: wdupree@nepc.com
Phone: (678) 433-4410

The following criteria are the minimum qualifications.

1. As of June 30, 2025, the named firm has, at a minimum, \$300 million of invested capital for the specific US SMID Equity (long-only) strategy you are proposing (i.e., as measured by the aggregate assets under management across strategy vehicles).
2. As of June 30, 2025, no individual client makes up more than 50% of the assets of the total strategy being proposed.
3. As of June 30, 2025, the named firm has a minimum three-year performance record for the specific strategy that you are proposing. The track record must be calculated in full compliance with the CFA Institute's Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS). Simulated or backtested returns of any kind will not be accepted.
4. Liquidity for the product being proposed should be at least monthly.
5. Your organization is a Registered Investment Advisor with the SEC or is an exempt entity as indicated in the FRS IPS.
6. Regardless of investment vehicle (i.e., separate account, commingled fund, or mutual fund), the named firm must agree to be governed by the Fiduciary standards set forth in the Louisiana Revised Statutes, Title 11, Sections 264, 264.7, and 269.
7. Regardless of investment vehicle (i.e., separate account, commingled fund, or mutual fund), the named firm must agree to comply with all board policies including the investment policy statement as adopted (IPS is available on the FRS website - <https://lafirs.org/firefighter-investing/>).

8. Regardless of investment vehicle (i.e., separate account, commingled fund, or mutual fund), the named firm must agree to the following terms regarding governing law and jurisdiction.

Governing Law

This Request for Proposal ("RFP") and any communications relative thereto shall be governed by the laws of the State of Louisiana, notwithstanding the principles of conflicts of laws or the place where any such Agreement is executed by any party or location of any office relative thereto.

Any Agreement entered between the Firefighters' Retirement System and RFP respondent, or any entity represented by RFP respondent, shall be governed by the laws of the State of Louisiana, notwithstanding the principles of conflicts of laws or the place where any such Agreement is executed by any party or location of any office relative thereto.

Jurisdiction

RFP respondent agrees that the exclusive jurisdiction for any dispute regarding this Request for Proposal ("RFP") shall be the 19th Judicial District Court, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, or the United States District Court, Middle District of Louisiana, whichever is appropriate as determined by the foregoing named court or courts. For avoidance of doubt, RFP respondent understands and agrees that the provisions of this term excludes jurisdiction by any other court in this world.

The exclusive jurisdiction regarding any dispute relative to any Agreement entered between the Firefighters' Retirement System and RFP respondent or any entity represented by RFP respondent, shall be the 19th Judicial District Court, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, or the United States District Court, Middle District of Louisiana, whichever is appropriate as determined by the foregoing named court or courts. For avoidance of doubt, RFP respondent understands and agrees that the provisions of this term excludes jurisdiction by any other court in this world.

Note: Terms in this RFP regarding fiduciary duty, governing law, and jurisdiction are in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statutes, Title 11, Section 2261.1. Firefighters' Retirement System shall not accept any other contractual language. This language may be incorporated into any contract by a side letter agreement.

SECTION III: TIMELINE AND SELECTION PROCESS

The following schedule has been established by the FRS Board and may be changed by the Board if necessary. If the schedule changes, all changes will be reflected on the NEPC search website at <https://www.nepc.com/investment-managers/>.

<i>Action</i>	<i>Date</i>
RFP issuance and advertisement period	August 21 – September 18, 2025
Deadline for submission of written questions	September 18, 2025
Responses to RFP questions posted	September 25, 2025
Deadline for submission of cover letter	October 3, 2025
Finalists selected for board interview	December 11, 2025
Finalist interviews	February 11, 2026
Contract awarded	As soon as practical following finalist selection, final due diligence, and completion of contract negotiation

A. Question and Answers

In an effort to clarify any issues in this RFP, FRS or NEPC will only respond to questions that are presented in writing and received by e-mail. Questions should be addressed to Michael Becker and David Barnes at the contact information provided above. All questions and answers will be consolidated into a single document and posted on the NEPC search website. The source of questions will not be disclosed in the document.

Blackout Period: Other than the RFP response itself and questions allowed according to the RFP document, any further marketing communication related to this search with FRS board members or staff is strictly prohibited from August 21, 2025 until after selection of the finalist. Any violation of this standard may be grounds for elimination from the search.

B. Proposal Submission

Respondent's firm, strategy, product and performance will be analyzed through the use of a third-party database. The database is provided by *eVestment* and is located on the web at <https://www.nasdaq.com/solutions/evestment>. As such, all fields must be updated in the *eVestment* database to be considered for this RFP.

Populating the *eVestment* database with firm and product information is essential to the completion of the RFP process. If the database is not fully populated, responses may be considered incomplete

and may be grounds for discontinuing consideration of proposals and products for this search. Fields must not be left blank, and must not contain *0*, *none*, or *N/A* unless necessary. Respondents will not be contacted by FRS' consultant or any FRS representative to fill in missing fields. Respondents should use additional comment fields provided to make qualifying notes as applicable.

If your firm does not already utilize the *eVestment* database, you can participate by sending an email with your contact information to: eVestmentSupport@nasdaq.com requesting assistance to establish the firm in the database. There is no charge for supplying data to the database. **All data must be entered by October 3, 2025.** Data submitted after this date may not be considered. Data entered must be **as of June 30, 2025.**

C. Evaluation and Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated by the FRS staff, the FRS investment consultant, and the FRS Board of Trustees. All firms selected as finalists will be required to appear at the February 11, 2026 board meeting for oral interviews.

SECTION IV: PROPOSAL CONTENT

The proposal will consist of the cover letter as described in Section II and the data submitted to the *eVestment* database as described in Section III. The database is located on the web at: <https://www.nasdaq.com/solutions/evestment>.

Below is a sample (but not all) of the data fields included in the eVestment database:

1. Firm name, address, and year founded
2. Firm ownership structure including percentage employee owned, publicly held, parent owned
3. Is the firm a registered investment advisor
4. Total firm assets under management and number of accounts
5. Asset size and number of accounts by client type
6. Vehicle breakdown: number of assets / accounts in separate accounts, commingled funds, and institutional/retail mutual funds
7. Number of accounts and dollars gained and lost for previous 5 years
8. Team description including number of portfolio managers, research analysts, traders and average years of experience
9. Employee turnover for previous 5 years
10. Product name, product description, product inception date, and primary equity capitalization and style emphasis
11. Product assets under management and number of accounts
12. Current number of holdings
13. Typical number of holdings
14. Weighted average market cap in millions
15. Median average market cap in millions
16. Breakdown of country allocations
17. Breakdown of sector allocations
18. Performance compared to the benchmark for a trailing 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 year time period as well as calendar year returns for the previous ten years
19. Risk and regression analysis including but not limited to: standard deviation, correlation coefficient, R-Squared, Beta, etc. for the trailing 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 year time period as well as for each calendar year for the previous 10 years
20. Efficiency measures including but not limited to: Sharpe Ratio, Treynor Ratio, Sortino Ratio, Tracking Error, and batting average for the trailing 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 year time period as well as for each calendar year for the previous 10 years
21. Fundamental characteristics including but not limited to: dividend yield, p/e ratio, earnings growth, and 5 year return on equity
22. Strategy snapshot including current cash position, use of cash, and annual turnover
23. Policy limits for cash positions, maximum position size, maximum sector exposure, maximum industry exposure, maximum country or regional exposure

24. Investment philosophy description
25. Research and screening process description
26. Portfolio construction and risk control methodology
27. Buy/sell discipline description
28. Trading strategy description
29. Security of assets and securities lending practices
30. Redemption terms
31. Use of derivatives
32. Firm financial information
33. Corporate governance policies
34. Firm internal control systems
35. Listing of 3rd party service providers
36. Firm disaster recovery plans
37. Insurance coverage
38. Fee schedules

Respondents should use additional comment fields provided to make qualifying notes as applicable. All responses should be direct and clear.

SECTION V: Cover Letter

Firefighters' Retirement System of Louisiana (FRS) US Small-Mid Cap (SMID) Equity (long only) Manager Search

The Firefighters' Retirement System ("FRS" or "System") is soliciting proposals from US Small-Mid Cap (SMID) Equity (long only) strategies, the passive benchmark for which is the Russell 2500 Index or an appropriate SMID Equity style benchmark. The System's total allocation to the selected manager will be approximately \$60 million.

[Insert firm name] is hereby submitting notification to participate in the above stated proposal process. [Insert firm name] is submitting information for its proposed product - [insert specific fund name – as it appears in the eVestment database] - for the purposes of this Request for Proposal.

[Insert firm name] has read, understands, and agrees to abide by the proposal process as outlined in the complete Request for Proposal document.

Please disclose below any conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest that the submitting firm or its principals may have with NEPC, LLC or its principals.

Conflict of interest with NEPC, LLC disclosure:

Please disclose immediately below any campaign contributions, any contractual business, and/or any conflicts of interest of potential conflicts of interest with any Firefighters' Retirement System trustee or staff member. If you have nothing to disclose, please state so immediately below:

Disclosure -

Campaign contribution/contractual business/ conflict of interest disclosure with the System:

Disclosure -

Please disclose immediately below if the investment management firm of the proposed strategy or the ultimate parent of the investment management firm of the proposed strategy is a foreign (non-US domiciled and/or headquartered) entity.

Disclosure -

MINIMUM CRITERIA

1. As of June 30, 2025, [insert firm name] has, at minimum, \$300 million of assets under management for the specific US SMID Equity (long only) strategy proposed (i.e., as measured by the aggregate assets under management across strategy vehicles).

YES ____ NO ____

2. As of June 30, 2025, does any individual client make up 50% or more of the assets under management of the strategy being proposed?

YES ____ NO ____

3. As of June 30, 2025, [insert firm name] has a minimum three-year performance record for the specific strategy being proposed. The track record must be calculated in full compliance with the CFA Institute's Global Investment Performance Standards (GIPS). Simulated or backtested returns of any kind will not be accepted.

YES ____ NO ____

4. Liquidity for the product being proposed is at least monthly.

YES ____ NO ____

5. As of June 30, 2025, [insert firm name] is a Registered Investment Advisor with the SEC or is an exempt entity as indicated in the FRS IPS.

YES ____ NO ____

6. Regardless of investment vehicle (i.e., separate account, commingled fund, or mutual fund), [Insert firm name] agrees to be governed by the Fiduciary standards set forth in the Louisiana Revised Statutes, Title 11, Sections 264, 264.7, and 269.

YES ____ NO ____

7. Regardless of investment vehicle (i.e., separate account, commingled fund, or mutual fund), [Insert firm name] agrees to comply with all board policies including the investment policy statement as adopted (IPS is available on the FRS website - <https://lafirs.org/firefighter-investing/>).

YES ____ NO ____

8. Regardless of investment vehicle (i.e., separate account, commingled fund, or mutual fund), [Insert firm name] agrees to the following terms regarding governing law and jurisdiction-

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YES____ NO____

A principal of the firm must acknowledge by signature that the contractual language above shall be a binding requirement for participation in this search process. The undersigned certifies that above statements are true and correct.

Signature

Date

Primary RFP Contact Information

[Insert primary RFP contact name]

[Insert primary RFP contact mailing address]

[Insert primary RFP contact email address]

[Insert primary RFP contact phone number]