



Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Executive Search Firm Services – Executive Director Central Arkansas Library System (CAL S)

Issued: April 9, 2026

Submissions Due: April 24, 2026 by 5:00pm CT

I. Overview

The Central Arkansas Library System (CAL S) invites qualified executive search firms to submit a Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) to assist in the recruitment and selection of an Executive Director. The current Executive Director is expected to depart on or after October 1, 2026, and CAL S intends to have a selected candidate in place on or before that date to ensure continuity of leadership.

CAL S is an independent, tax-supported public library system that serves 344,553 people in urban, suburban, and rural neighborhoods. We have 13 neighborhood branches in Little Rock, Jacksonville, Sherwood, Maumelle, Perryville, and Wrightsville. In addition, our headquarters called “Library Square” includes our Main Library, our stand-alone entrepreneurship center (Rock It! Lab), our 315-seat theater and the Roberts Library of Arkansas History & Art.

CAL S employs approximately 320 staff and maintains a collection of over one million items with the mission to connect people, nurture potential and grow community. CAL S is governed by a 13-member Board of Directors appointed by participating local governments, and the Executive Director reports directly to the Board.

This RFQ is intended to identify firms with the experience, capacity, and interest to lead a successful national search. This is not a request for a full proposal.

II. Scope of Services

The selected firm will partner with the CAL S Board of Directors to develop and execute a comprehensive national recruitment strategy to identify highly qualified candidates for the Executive Director position. This will include:

- Assisting with drafting a job description
- Sourcing and screening applicants
- Evaluating qualifications
- Presenting a shortlist of recommended candidates



The firm may also support the design and facilitation of the interview and selection process, including providing guidance and tools as needed. Additionally, the firm may conduct reference and background checks for final candidates and assist with offer discussions and transition support to help ensure a successful placement. A detailed scope of work will be finalized in collaboration with the selected firm.

III. Submission Requirements

To ensure consistency and ease of review, SOQs should be limited to 5-7 pages.

Firm Experience

- Brief description of your firm, including years in business and areas of specialization
- Experience conducting executive-level searches (libraries, public sector, or nonprofits preferred)
- Examples of similar placements, including organization type, position filled, and approximate timeline

Qualifications and Approach

- Key personnel who would support this engagement
- Brief overview of your recruitment approach and methodology
- Any unique strengths or differentiators

Availability and Capacity

- Ability to begin work upon selection
- Estimated timeline to complete the search
- Any potential conflicts of interest or capacity constraints

Pricing Structure

- High-level fee structure (flat fee, retainer, percentage, or hybrid)
- Description of any additional or reimbursable costs
- Any guarantee or replacement provisions

IV. Timeline

The timeline is subject to change.

Date	Activity
April 9, 2026	RFQ Issued
April 24, 2026 5:00pm CT	Submissions Due
Late April	Review of Responses
Early May	Optional Interviews
May 2026	Selection of Search Firm



May 2026	Search Launched
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V. Submission Instructions

Submit your SOQ electronically in PDF format to:

Ray Terry, Chief of Staff

Central Arkansas Library System

rwterry@cals.org

Subject line: RFQ – Executive Director Search – [Firm Name]

Late submissions may not be considered.

Questions regarding this RFQ should be directed to the contact listed above prior to the submission deadline.

VI. Additional Information

- CALS reserves the right to reject any or all submissions
- This RFQ does not constitute a contract or guarantee of award
- CALS may request additional information or invite select firms to interview
- CALS may waive informalities in the best interest of the organization

