**APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE**

**\*\*You must provide separate RFP responses for each product response if your firm is submitting multiple products.\*\***

1. **FIRM HISTORY**
2. Organization
3. Firm Name (Legal name of the contracting entity):
4. Address:
5. Telephone:
6. Contact(s)/Title:
7. Email address:
8. History & Background
9. Year Founded:
10. Number and Location of Offices:
11. Please describe the organizational structure of your company, including the parent company, any holding company and subsidiaries and affiliates.
12. For privately held firms, describe how equity is distributed across the owners. Are the majority of equity owners employees?
13. Do you anticipate any near-term change in your company’s ownership or other significant change in your company? If yes, please explain.
14. Has your company’s ownership or senior management changed in the past ten years? If yes, please explain.
15. Over the past 5 years has your company, or any officer or principal, been involved in any business litigation or legal proceedings, including, without limitation, involving the State or any agency or political subdivision thereof? If yes, provide a brief explanation and indicate current status.
16. Discuss the results of any regulatory examination (such as by the SEC) and any material issues raised by your independent auditors in the past three years.
17. Discuss briefly your firm’s disaster recovery plan and any recent modifications. When were your procedures last tested and what was the outcome?
18. Describe the firm’s compliance structure and policies. What systems are used to monitor compliance?
19. Provide the date when your organization became duly authorized to do business in the State of New York. If you are not currently authorized, provide the date which you anticipate being duly authorized.
20. Provide information on your insurance coverage and bonding:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type of Policy/Bond** | **$ Amount Per \_\_\_\_\_ (Indicate)** |
| Fiduciary liability |  |
| Errors and omissions |  |
| Other (describe) |  |

1. Briefly describe the firm’s cyber-security system, including any programs and/or infrastructure used to prevent access to client data and other confidential information. When was the system last tested and what was the outcome?
2. **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**
3. Does your firm maintain a formal diversity and inclusion policy?
4. Who oversees your firm's diversity and inclusion efforts?
5. Does your firm participate in recruitment initiatives focused on attracting women and/or diverse candidates?
6. Describe your firm's strategies and tactics for retaining women and diverse employees.
7. Complete the diversity and gender profiles of the team responsible for the management of the proposed product/strategy as of December 31, 2024.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Diversity Profile** | **# Employees** |
| African American / Black |  |
| Native American, Alaskan Native or Indigenous Peoples |  |
| Asian |  |
| Caucasian / White |  |
| Hispanic or Latino/a/x |  |
| Hawaiian / Pacific Islander |  |
| Middle Eastern or North African |  |
| Other (please specify) |  |
| TOTAL |  |

**Gender**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Male** | **Female** | **Non-Binary/Other** |
|  |  |  |

1. Describe how your firm considers diversity and inclusion on the investment team.
2. How often does your firm offer training programs around diversity and inclusion and/or unconscious biases?
3. Describe your firm's diversity and inclusion training policy and the most recent training initiative.
4. Does your firm offer flexible working hours or remote work flexibility for those in need?
5. Does your firm maintain a formal internal Pay-Parity Policy?
6. **ASSETS UNDER MANAGEMENT**
7. Please provide the following information as of March 31, 2025 and year-end 2024, 2023, 2022, and 2021:

A. Total firm-wide assets under management.

B. Total subject product assets under management.

C. Total assets in subject product broken out by vehicle type (e.g., commingled fund, mutual fund, other).

1. What is your stated target capacity for the proposed strategy? How did you arrive at this asset figure? When was the target last reviewed?
2. Has this strategy ever been closed to new or current investors? If the capacity target is reached, will you continue to accept additional inflows from existing clients?
3. **EXPERIENCE**

**Portfolio Management**

1. Please provide an organizational chart as well as biographies and current functional roles of key personnel who would be assigned to this account. Please describe who the key decision-makers are on the strategy as part of your response.
2. Does the investment team responsible for this product manage any other strategies? What is the overlap across strategies that the team manages?
3. Complete the following chart as of March 31, 2025:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Firm Total** | **Product / Strategy** |
| Total Full-time Employees |  |  |
| Portfolio Managers |  |  |
| Research Analysts |  |  |
| Client Service |  |  |
| Other |  |  |
| TOTAL |  |  |

1. Where is the investment team located?
2. How is the investment research team structured (global sector/industry, country/region, generalists, etc.)?
3. List the key employees added/lost over the last five years, by name and title. Please include all employees who would have an impact on the product/strategy.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **# of Professionals Added** | **# of Professionals Lost** |
| 2024 |  |  |
| 2023 |  |  |
| 2022 |  |  |
| 2021 |  |  |
| 2020 |  |  |

1. Provide the date when the CURRENT investment management team took over portfolio management duties. For instance, if the team came from another firm and took over the strategy from a prior team, please specify when that happened.
2. Discuss the career and succession plans for key investment personnel, along with any already established timelines.
3. Are personnel managing this product personally invested in the strategy? If so, please describe the dollar amount and/or percent of net worth invested and whether investment in the strategy is required.
4. When is the latest time each day that you would expect to distribute the daily NAV to NYSDCP’s Administrative Service Agency?

**Clients**

1. Please list the number of clients and the amount of assets for which your firm has provided product/strategy management services for each of the past five years as described in Section III of the RFP, entitled “Product Design Requirements.”

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **As of (Date)** | **Number of Clients** | **Total Market Value of Assets** |
| March 31, 2025 |  |  |
| December 31, 2024 |  |  |
| December 31, 2023 |  |  |
| December 31, 2022 |  |  |
| December 31, 2021 |  |  |

1. Please list your three largest Section 457 Plan accounts by amount of assets for this product/strategy.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Client** | **Assets ($ Mil.)** |
| 1. |  |
| 2. |  |
| 3. |  |

1. Please list your three largest defined contribution plan accounts, other than Section 457 Plan accounts, by amount of assets for which product/strategy management services are provided by your firm.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Client** | **Assets ($ Mil.)** |
| 1. |  |
| 2. |  |
| 3. |  |

1. Provide the following information regarding product/strategy client gains and losses for the past five calendar years.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **$ Assets Gained** | **# Accounts Gained** | **$ Assets Lost**  | **# Accounts Lost** |
| 2024 |  |  |  |  |
| 2023 |  |  |  |  |
| 2022 |  |  |  |  |
| 2021 |  |  |  |  |
| 2020 |  |  |  |  |

1. Provide a current list of the firm’s five largest product/strategy clients, including name, contact, telephone number, asset values, length of relationship, and the services provided. After informing you of our intentions, the Board may contact any of these clients as references.
2. **ACTIVE ESG GLOBAL EQUITY PRODUCT INFORMATION**

Please answer the following questions as they pertain to the proposed product composite(s). This information is intended to supplement information collected in Callan*DNA*. We will also be utilizing Callan*DNA* to review return and portfolio holdings information.

1. Indicate the full name of the product that your firm is proposing.
2. Please describe your investment philosophy and process, including how Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) factors are incorporated. If the product has an SFDR Article status, please indicate the status.
3. Please describe the level of importance of ESG factors relative to traditional factors in your investment process. When and how are ESG considerations integrated into the investment process? As part of ESG considerations, does the strategy use any positive or negative exclusionary screens for ESG attributes? If yes, please describe the screens and rationale for the screens.
4. What is your purpose in considering ESG (e.g. alpha generation and/or risk mitigation)?
5. Do you have specific areas of ESG emphasis (environmental, social and/or governance – and subsets of these)?
6. Would you or have you proposed this strategy in an impact equity manager search, and if so, why?
7. Please describe how you conduct your ESG research efforts (e.g. use external or internal data) and how such research is housed and shared internally.
8. Please describe the background of investment professionals dedicated to ESG research.
9. What is your long-term total return objective for this strategy?
10. What is the target benchmark for this strategy? Please include both the broad, capitalization-weighted benchmark and any ESG-specific reference benchmark used. Please note that the Plan’s primary benchmark for the product selected will be the broad, capitalization-weighted benchmark.
11. Does the stated target benchmark influence portfolio construction? Do you have a targeted or expected tracking error?
12. Describe the performance expectations for the strategy. What has been the historical upside/downside capture ratio for the past five years?
13. When do you expect the portfolio to out/underperform? What market conditions provide a headwind to performance? What market conditions provide a tailwind?
14. Discuss the main reasons for your under/out performance against the benchmark for each of the past five (5) calendar years (2020-2024).
15. Please provide a summary of your buy and sell criteria.
16. Who has the final say for portfolio buy/sell decisions?
17. Do you visit and/or engage with companies in whom you invest? If yes, what benefits do you gain from company visits and/or engagements?
18. Describe your firm’s policies towards proxy voting and your proposed method for this product.
19. What is your universe of investable securities?
20. Please describe your portfolio construction process. What limits exist with regards to over/underweights (security, industry or sector) relative to the stated benchmark?
21. Has the investment process changed since the inception of the strategy? If so, how? Have any changes been made to exclusionary screens, and for what reason(s)?
22. What is the historical range of the number of portfolio holdings?
23. What is the maximum position size an individual security can represent in the portfolio?
24. What is the stated maximum cash position this strategy/vehicle can hold? What is the highest cash position the proposed strategy held over the past five years? Please list the average cash percentage for the past three calendar years. (2021-2024).
25. Are there circumstances where the portfolio would hold more than 10% cash? If so, please explain.
26. Please list the annual portfolio turnover for the past three calendar years (2021-2024). Would you expect future portfolio turnover to be in-line with past results?
27. Briefly describe your trading process. How do you ensure best execution? How are trades allocated?
28. Describe your firm’s approach to risk management.
29. If you currently manage multiple vehicles for this strategy, please describe any differences between the mutual fund, commingled fund, or separate accounts.
30. Does the proposed product accrue expenses, or is it willing to do so?
31. Do any of the proposed vehicles participate in securities lending? If so, please detail.
32. Does the strategy utilize any of the following instruments: derivatives, international securities, ADR’s, Fixed Income and/or IPO’s? If yes, please detail the use and rules regarding these instruments.
33. What distinguishes your team from the competition? What are your competitive advantages?
34. Describe the compensation structure for the investment professionals that are involved with the proposed strategy.
35. Please provide a brief description of any other material information about your firm that we should be aware of in considering your response to this RFP.

**VI. Fees**

Please provide your fee proposal for the vehicle(s) being proposed.  The proposed vehicle must be a daily valued, daily liquid vehicle such as a mutual fund or CIT that can be used in a 457(b) Plan.  **Separate accounts will not be considered.  Please note the Plan is not willing to seed a vehicle such as a CIT.**

For each vehicle available to NYSDCP, please detail the size of the vehicle, the fee schedule, whether or not there are other administrative expenses associated with the vehicle, any revenue sharing or loads, and if the fee is contingent on the level of assets mapped into the option.  It is expected that this option will be added to the Plan with assets mapped from the incumbent (if not retained), and that the contract period will be in effect for a maximum of ten years.

Please fill out the table below for each strategy / vehicle being proposed as of March 31, 2025:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Proposed vehicle legal structure (ex: Mutual Fund or CIT)**  |   |
| **Unit/Share class and Ticker (if available)** |    |
| **If not a mutual fund, please also provide the legal structure of the commingled fund (LLC, Delaware Business Trust, 3c1, or any other)** |    |
| **Full Fee Schedule**  |    |
| **Entry/Exit Fees (Y/N)**  |    |
| **Securities Lending (SL) Split (Fund/Manager)** |  |
| **Trailing 12-month % of assets on loan**  |  |
| **Trailing 12-month net income from SL** |  |
| **Product AUM (in $MM) as of 3/31/25** |   |
| **Vehicle AUM (in $MM) as of 3/31/25 (please include the AUM of all shares in the pool)**  |    |
| **Daily Valuation (Y/N)**  |    |
| **Daily Liquid (Y/N)**  |    |
| **Minimum Account Size $MM** |    |
| **Is the proposed vehicle on the Nationwide recordkeeper platform? If not, and if chosen, are you willing to get on it?** |    |
| **Is there revenue sharing with Nationwide (Y/N) - DC Only** |  |