

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR  
EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES**

**SAINT PAUL TEACHERS' RETIREMENT FUND ASSOCIATION**

**2550 University Ave W, Suite 312N  
St Paul MN 55114**

**Phill Tencick Executive Director  
June 1, 2026**

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**SAINT PAUL TEACHERS' RETIREMENT FUND ASSOCIATION  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
AUDIT SERVICES**

**INTRODUCTION**

**1.0 INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL**

The St Paul Teachers' Retirement Fund Association (SPTRFA), through its Executive Director, Phill Tencick, requests proposals from firms interested in providing external audit services to the SPTRFA. This Request for Proposal (RFP) is to select an independent certified public accounting firm (Auditor) to perform the following audit services and non-audit services on an annual basis during the contract period FY 2027 through FY 2029 with the option to extend two additional years through FY2031:

- 1) audit of the SPTRFA financial statements,
- 2) audit of the employer census data in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) and American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) requirements,
- 3) audit of the required GASB Statement No. 68 (GASB 68) SPTRFA schedules of employer allocations and pension amounts by employer, and
- 4) publishing of the financial report in conformity with ADA and applicable professional standards.

**1.1 CONTACT PERSON**

Direct all questions and correspondence about this RFP to:

**David Andrews, Controller**  
**2550 University Ave W, Suite 12N**  
**St Paul MN 55114**  
**Phone: 651-642-2550**  
**it@sptrfa.org**

Only written questions submitted by the question deadline in Section 1.2 will be accepted. Written answers to such questions shall be sent to each person on record as having received an RFP and will be posted on the SPTRFA website.

As of June 1, 2026 firms that intend to submit a Proposal should not contact any SPTRFA Staff or Board Trustee member other than to submit written questions to the "Contact Person". Communicating directly or indirectly with any other SPTRFA staff or Board Trustee during this RFP process will result in immediate elimination from the selection process.

## 1.2 TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

The following is the tentative time schedule applicable to this RFP. All dates are subject to modification by SPTRFA.

- **Issuance of RFP and official notices placed: June 1, 2026, RFP**
- **Question deadline: June 15, 2026**
- **Answers to question provided: June 22, 2026**
- **RFP submission deadline: July 6, 2026**
- **RFP evaluations by SPTRFA July 31, 2026**
- **Finalist interviews by SPTRFA: August 17-21, 2026**
- **Board approval: September 16, 2026**
- **Contract award: September 18, 2026**

## 1.3 PENSION PLAN BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The SPTRFA is a \$1.5 billion single-employer contributory defined benefit plan (Plan) qualified as a tax-exempt entity under section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Plan is not subject to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA). SPTRFA administers two defined benefit plan structures; the Basic Plan whose members do not participate in Social Security, and the Coordinated Plan whose members simultaneously participate in Social Security. SPTRFA is governed in accordance with the provisions of Minnesota Statutes Chapters 354A and 356. The SPTRFA provides retirement, disability, and death benefits to its members and their beneficiaries.

The Plan has more than 3,300 contributing members, 4,000 retirees and beneficiaries, and two employers. The two active participating employers that contribute to the Fund are the Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) and Saint Paul College (SPC). SPC has only one remaining contributing employee. In addition, the State of Minnesota makes statutorily required payments to the Fund and is, therefore, classified as a non-employer contributing entity.

**Board of Trustees:** Management of the SPTRFA is vested in a ten-member Board of Trustees (the Board). Nine trustees are elected by and from the Association's membership and serve rotating three-year terms. The Board of Independent School District Number 625, Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS), annually appoints the tenth trustee, who serves as an ex-officio member of the Board. The Board formulates administrative policies and procedures and authorizes benefit payments to members.

**Investment Committee (IC):** The committee consists of all members of the Board and is tasked with reviewing, modifying and ensuring conformity with the Fund's Investment

Policy, as well as issues of setting asset allocation, oversight of external managers, engaging with investment staff and consultants, and examining investment strategies to best ensure the portfolio achieves its long-term goals within its established risk parameters.

**Investment Activities:** The IC is entrusted with certain investment-related responsibilities as described in Minnesota statutes chapters 356A.06 and .354A.08. The IC, in accordance with applicable State laws and in accordance with the prudent person rule, has the power to set investment policy and hire an investment consultant.

**Annual Financial Report (AFR):** The AFR is prepared in conformity with the principles of government accounting and most current reporting pronouncements of Government Accounting Standard Board (GASB) and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The AFR is prepared on the accrual basis of accounting and audited each year. SPTRFA wishes to prepare an Annual Comprehensive Annual Report (ACFR) and apply for the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award issued by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).

**Auditor:** The most recently completed audit was performed by Minnesota Office of the State Auditor (OSA) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. The most recent AFR is available on the OSA website at:

<https://www.osa.state.mn.us/audit-resources/reports/audit-reports/>.

**Plan Custodian:** US Bank serves as the master custodian of assets and provides the official book of record for investment valuations.

**Investment Consultant:** Meketa Investment Group is the Plans investment consultant. Meketa provides investment performance reporting for total plan and asset classes.

**Financial Systems:** SPTRFA uses Sage Intacct accounting software for its accounting functions, including general ledger and accounts payable.

The SPTRFA pension administration system for member and employer recordkeeping, including benefit payments and contributions, is an internally developed system identified as TUTTI. The TUTTI system is supported by Sagitec Benefits Administrative Solutions.

**SPTRFA Finance Audit Coordination:** David Andrews, Controller, will coordinate the working relationship with the Auditor. The Controller will aid the Auditor in day-to-day contacts during the audit fieldwork.

## **NATURE OF SERVICES REQUIRED**

### **2.0 SCOPE OF WORK TO BE PERFORMED**

#### Audit of Financial Statements

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, and each fiscal year thereafter, through June 30, 2031, the Plan requests a proposal for the independent auditor's report consisting of the following reports:

- Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements
- Report on the Audit of the Schedules
- Minnesota Legal Compliance

The information to be audited is the Plan's financial statements including the pension census data in accordance with the GAAP, the schedules associated with GASB 68 including an audit of the Plan's Schedule of Employer Allocations and the Schedule of Pension Amount by Employer, and compliance to the Minnesota Legal Compliance Audit Guide for Relief Associations pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 6.65, insofar as they relate to accounting matters.

#### Nonaudit services

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027, and each fiscal year thereafter through June 30, 2031, the Plan requests a proposal for the publishing of the AFR or ACFR in conformity with ADA and applicable professional standards. SPTRFA will assume all management responsibilities for the final product and accept responsibility for the published report.

### **2.1 AUDITING STANDARDS TO BE FOLLOWED**

The audits must be performed in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards for financial audits contained in *Government Audit Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States (GAGAS). Applicants must be a CPA firm with an office in the State of Minnesota that meets the requirements of section Minnesota Statutes 326A.05

### **2.2 REPORTS TO BE ISSUED AND REQUIRED COMMUNICATIONS**

The audit firm shall issue an independent auditor's report on the fair presentation of the SPTRFA financial statements in conformity with GAAP, an independent auditor's report on the fair presentation of the GASB 68 required statements, SPTRFA Schedule of Employer Allocations, and Schedule of Pension Amount by Employer.

The audit firm shall publish the completed AFR or ACFR in compliance with ADA and applicable professional publishing standards. Reports shall not be made public until approved by the SPTRFA Board of Trustees.

### **2.3 AUDIT REQUESTS**

Each year the Auditor will provide SPTRFA with an audit schedule to include dates of interim and year-end fieldwork, and a list of all information needed for the audit. This information shall be provided prior to any interim or year-end fieldwork commencing.

### **2.4 MINIMUM REQUIRED MEETINGS**

The Auditor must, at a minimum, participate in the following meetings either via remote video conference (unless otherwise stated) or at SPTRFA offices each year on dates established by SPTRFA:

- Entrance conference with the SPTRFA Board President, SPTRFA staff assisting with the audit, and others as deemed necessary by SPTRFA, prior to commencement of fieldwork,
- Periodic audit status meetings with key SPTRFA staff on an as-needed basis for the purposes of assessing audit issues and audit schedules,
- Exit conference with a SPTRFA Board of Trustee representative to discuss draft financial statements, independent auditor's reports, and management letter prior to release of the opinions and management letter to the SPTRFA,
- Attend the December Board meeting **in person**, usually the third Wednesday of the month, and make a presentation of the independent auditor's reports, management letter and other required communications to the SPTRFA Board of Trustees, and
- Such other meetings and conferences as may be reasonably required by the Board of Trustees during the engagement.

### **2.5 AUDIT SCHEDULE**

The Auditor may begin interim work at any time after the contract is awarded.

**September 30<sup>th</sup>** – SPTRFA will provide draft financial statements available for audit.

**October 31<sup>st</sup>** – SPTRFA will provide draft actuarial reports.

**November 15<sup>th</sup>** – SPTRFA will provide a complete draft of the AFR or ACFR, including notes to the financial statement, required supplemental information (RSI), and other supplemental information (OSI).

**December** – the Auditor shall present the audited financial report and resulting findings to

the Board of Trustees for its approval and acceptance. This requirement will necessitate the Auditor present the final audit reports, management letter and any other required communications under GAGAS at the December Board meeting, usually the third Wednesday of the month.

## **2.6 AUDIT DOCUMENTATION AND RETENTION AND ACCESS TO AUDIT DOCUMENTATION**

All audit documentation and reports must be retained, at the Auditor's expense, for a minimum of five (5) years, unless the firm is notified in writing by SPTRFA of the need to extend the retention period. The Auditor will be required to make audit documentation available, upon request, to the SPTRFA or its designees.

In addition, the firm shall respond to the reasonable inquiries of successor auditors and allow successor auditors to review non-proprietary audit documentation relating to matters of continuing accounting or auditing significance.

## **ASSISTANCE TO BE PROVIDED TO THE SELECTED AUDITOR**

### **3.0 SPTRFA ASSISTANCE**

SPTRFA Controller will be responsible for preparing the AFR or ACFR and will be available during the audit to assist the firm by providing information, documentation, and explanations as necessary.

### **3.1 EXTERNAL ACTUARY ASSISTANCE**

The SPTRFA external actuary will provide a report for audit of actuarial data and calculations for the purpose of complying with the requirements of GASB 67 and GASB 68. These reports will be available for audit by about November 15 each year.

### **3.2 SPTRFA INTERNAL ASSISTANCE**

The SPTRFA staff will be available to assist with any internal-control questions and issues.

### **3.3 CURRENT EXTERNAL AUDITOR**

Minnesota Statutes 354A.021, Subd. 8, states that the Minnesota Office of the State Auditor (OSA) is responsible for the audit of the SPTRFA. OSA has prepared the SPTRFA for many years. However, they are no longer able complete the required audit by the requested deadline and have authorized SPTRFA to contract with a third party.

## **PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate the qualifications and competence of the Auditors seeking to undertake the audit work identified in this RFP. Each proposer must adhere to the proposal requirements contained in this section for proposal content and format to ensure comparability among proposals.

### **4.0 PROPOSAL FORMAT AND CONTENT**

The detailed proposal should include the following.

#### **4.1 WORK PLAN.**

Submit a preliminary work plan for performance of the services described in Section 2. Include a list of staff hours budgeted by staff level.

Include your proposed methodology for the following:

- a) Risk assessment methodology.
- b) Balance between reviews of controls and substantive testing.
- c) Reporting approach, presentations to management and Board.
- d) Number of hours allocated to the assignment.
- e) Approach to reviewing the financial system.
- f) Ability to complete the engagement within established deadlines.

#### **4.2 TECHNICAL EXPERIENCE OF THE FIRM.**

Provide a statement supporting the qualitative reasons the firm should be considered for the contract. Include pertinent facts regarding:

- a) Prior experience auditing public pension plans.
- b) Provide a list of public pension plans audited by the firm over the past five (5) years.
- c) Available professional resources in the area of actuarial consulting.
- d) Available professional resources in the area of investment accounting.

#### **4.3 QUALIFICATION OF FIRM AND STAFF ASSIGNED.**

- a) State the approximate size of the firm.
- b) Number and experience level of professional staff proposed for this engagement, and whether on a full-time or part-time basis.
- c) Provide a list of your principal offices and indicate the location from which the work on this engagement will be accomplished.

- d) Provide confirmation the CPA firm meets the requirements of Minnesota Statutes 326A.05 that outlines the requirements for entities to obtain a permit to practice as a CPA firm. The requirements can be located at the Minnesota Board of Accountancy: <https://boa.state.mn.us/firms.html>
- e) Identify what distinguishes the firm from other firms.
- f) Identify the principal supervisory and management staff, including the specific partner(s) and manager(s) who will be assigned to the engagement. Indicate the CPA licensure status of each person. Submit resumes of each person. Provide as much information as possible about the qualifications and experience of the staff to be employed on this engagement. Indicate how staff competency level over the term of the contract will be assured. SPTRFA reserves the right to perform background checks for any person working on an audit engagement, including knowledge experts identified in the next bullet.
- g) Specifically identify and provide biographies for those individuals in your firm who can be called upon with specific questions in the following areas:
  - i. Information technology.
  - ii. Actuarial services.
  - iii. Investment accounting.
  - iv. GASB pronouncements.
  - v. Public pension defined benefit pension plan.
- h) A statement about your firm's potential conflict of interest should the firm be selected for this proposal.
- i) Submit a copy of your firm's latest Peer Review Report and management letter.

#### **4.4 REFERENCES**

A list of at least three (3) references for which your proposed team performed the types of services outlined in this RFP within the past three years. Ideally, these firm references should be similar in size and nature to SPTRFA. Please include the name and address of the firm or agency as well as a contact person, telephone number, and email address for each reference.

#### **4.5 AUDIT FEE**

All proposals must include the audit fee summary by year as prescribed in Appendix A. The audit fee is to be shown by detail audit service to be provided. If there are other services NOT described in the Scope of Work in this RFP but are required for the successful completion of an annual financial audit in accordance with professional auditing standards, those services should be sufficiently described in the proposal and explained why necessary. Fees related to such additional scope of work must be separately itemized in your overall fee proposal. The proposal should identify the level of staff, billing rates and

approximate number of hours that are included in the proposed fee.

#### **4.6 AUDIT PROPOSAL AUTHORIZATION**

All proposals must include the name of firm, authorized signature, title, and date.

##### Proposal Delivery

Please submit questions and submissions to [it@sptrfa.org](mailto:it@sptrfa.org). Additionally, please submit three (3) hard copies of your responses to Section IV. Hard copies should be sent to:

St. Paul Teachers Retirement Fund Association  
Attn: RFP Submission  
2550 University Ave., Suite 312N  
St. Paul, MN 55114-1005

NO LATER THAN 4:00 p.m. CST on the Response Deadline of July 31, 2026. All responses and materials related to this RFP will become the property of the SPTRFA.

**PROPOSALS NOT RECEIVED BY THE RESPONSE DEADLINE AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

#### **4.7 PROPOSAL CONDITIONS AND DISCLAIMERS**

**WAIVER/CURE OF MINOR INFORMALITIES, ERRORS AND OMISSIONS:** SPTRFA, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to waive or permit cure of minor informalities, errors or omissions with respect to this RFP.

**REJECTION OF PROPOSALS:** The SPTRFA reserves the right to reject without prejudice any or all proposals, to waive any informality and to retain all proposals submitted and use any idea or concept in a submitted proposal regardless of whether that proposal is selected.

**PRE-PROPOSAL QUESTIONS:** Specific questions or explanations desired by a bidder concerning the RFP should be submitted electronically to the Contact Person by the Question Deadline.

**COSTS OF PREPARING THE PROPOSAL:** The costs and delivery of the proposal are solely the responsibility of the Auditor. SPTRFA is not liable for any costs incurred by the proposer in replying to this RFP.

**ADDENDA:** Any supplemental instructions, amendments, or changes in this RFP, or attached documents, shall be in the form of a written addendum to this Request. If issued, such addenda shall be sent electronically to all firms on record as having submitted an RFP.

CHANGES TO PROPOSAL: The SPTRFA shall unconditionally accept a proposal without alteration or correction, except as provided in this paragraph. If, prior to the final filing date for submission of proposals, an Auditor discovers an error or omission in a proposal already submitted to the SPTRFA, the Auditor may correct the original submission by sending the changed content from the original response in a Word document and making the necessary corrections using track changes so the changes can be easily identified. Modification offered in any other manner - oral, written, electronically or facsimile transmission - will not be considered.

## EVALUATION PROCESS AND FINAL SELECTION

### 5.0 METHODOLOGY FOR EVALUATING PROPOSALS

The contract for audit services will be awarded based on demonstrated competence and qualifications to perform the services for a fair and reasonable price. The following is the evaluation process that SPTRFA will use for evaluating proposals and making the contract award:

<b>Evaluation Factors</b> <i>(Correspond to Section 4.0)</i>	<b>Points Available</b>
<b>Work Plan</b>	
Risk assessment methodology	10
Balance of control reviews and substantive testing	10
Number of hours allocated to assignment	5
Approach to reviewing pension system	5
Ability to complete engagement by established deadline	Pass/Fail
<b>Technical Experience of the Firm</b>	
Audit firm experience auditing public pension plans	10
Audit firm experience with actuarial information	10
Audit firm experience with investment accounting	10
List of public plans audited over past 5 years	Pass/Fail
<b>Qualification of Firm and Staff</b>	
Size of firm and size of audit staff assigned	Pass/Fail
Principal offices and location of work engagement	Pass/Fail
Confirmation that firm complies with MN Stat 326A.05	Pass/Fail
Statement of firm's potential conflict of interest	Pass/Fail
Copy of firm's latest Peer Review Report	Pass/Fail
Evaluation of firm qualifications	10
Evaluation of principal supervisory staff qualifications	10
<b>Audit Fee</b>	
Cost	20
<b>Audit Proposal Authorization</b>	
Audit received in correct format by due date	Pass/Fail
<b>TOTAL POINTS AVAILABLE</b>	<b>100</b>

## **5.1 NOTICE OF SELECTION**

SPTRFA will provide notice to the Auditor selected and provide a service agreement for signature to formalize the agreement.

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**Appendix A**

**St Paul Teachers Retirement Fund Association.**

**Audit Fee Summary**

<b>PROPOSED FEES</b>	<b>2027</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>2029</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2031</b>
Project based services					
a) Audit Financial Statements					
b) GASB 68 Audit Work					
c) Publishing Financial Statements					
*Other services					
a)					
b)					
Total Fee					

\*If there are other services NOT described in the Scope of Work in this RFP but are required for the successful completion of an annual financial audit in accordance with professional auditing standards, those services should be identified separately.

<b>ANNUAL BREAKDOWN FOR AUDIT</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<b>Total</b>
Manager			
Director			
Senior Auditor			
Intermediate Auditor			
Staff Auditor			
Other Titles			
Totals			