

I. BACKGROUND

Since 2018, CA Bridge has cultivated an extensive network of emergency department (ED) physicians and behavioral health navigators to assist people with substance use disorders (SUD) to access medication for addiction treatment (MAT) and harm reduction resources while destigmatizing SUD and promoting a culture of harm reduction in the healthcare setting.

CA Bridge aims to expand access to MAT by creating new pathways for individuals with SUD. These pathways will help individuals learn about treatment options and harm reduction practices, find local treatment options, and receive navigation resources or support to engage and remain in high-quality care. This expansion includes the development of a technology platform that includes a publicly available MAT phone line and web-based system to connect to resources and care. The main goal of the connection platform—which we are calling “CA Bridge Connect”—is to connect people seeking SUD treatment with same-day low-barrier MAT providers.

[CA Bridge](#) is a program of the Public Health Institute’s [Bridge Center](#). Funding for this opportunity is provided by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) through State Opioid Response (SOR) IV grant funds from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

II. SCOPE OF WORK

CA Bridge is issuing this request for proposals (RFP) to identify a vendor to design and develop a platform that connects individuals interested in harm reduction resources and SUD treatment with navigator-supported access to the continuum of harm reduction and SUD services potentially available to them. A primary focus will be same-day access to low-barrier MAT services. This platform will make it easier for people to access CA Bridge’s ever-expanding Treatment Access Network, which includes emergency departments, hospitals, federally qualified health clinics (FQHCs), community clinics, and telehealth providers. Providers in our network must offer low-barrier¹ access to treatment, and we are prioritizing increasing access to care and treatment for people who utilize Medi-Cal for health insurance.

Participants should be able to join CA Bridge Connect through four pathways: (1) online self-enrollment, (2) second-party referral (typically a healthcare provider), (3) phone call, and (4) text message. When joining, participants will consent to be contacted by a CA Bridge-affiliated SUD provider with information about SUD treatment. Once a new participant joins, participating medical providers and behavioral health navigators will be notified electronically. Participating providers will be able to access contact information of treatment-interested participants on the connection platform and, with the available information, contact the participant and provide navigation to low-barrier care. Recruitment of providers to participate in the connection platform will leverage CA Bridge’s existing and growing network of navigators, low-barrier MAT providers, and SUD treatment programs to connect treatment-interested individuals to care across the state.

Participants will receive automated text messages, text-based surveys, and consent forms and indicate specific needs through text responses to structured questions. The platform will have the capability for two-way texting and push notifications between treatment-interested participants and navigators.

The scope of work for this opportunity includes a discovery period during which the vendor will gather information about user needs and the CA Bridge network before proposing a technical solution that meets our

¹ Low-barrier means obstacles such as prohibitive costs or insurance requirements, lengthy wait times, specialized locations, inconvenient hours, and excessive paperwork and other requirements have been removed.



goals and addresses the needs and barriers across user groups, developing and launching CA Bridge Connect, and collaborating with CA Bridge to develop a plan to maintain the platform.

A. Project Phases and Timeline

CA Bridge proposes the following phased approach to develop and launch the connection platform.

Phase	Proposed Deliverables	Proposed Timeline
One: Discovery and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed technical solution Design and implementation plan Wireframes and feature set 	March 2025 - April 2025
Two: Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UX/UI design Solution build/implementation 	May 2025 - June 2025
Three: User acceptance testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> User acceptance testing User testing findings 	July 2025 - August 2025
Four: Pilot the participant connection platform with a phased approach in one to two regions to be identified by CA Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beta version of the connection platform ready to launch in pilot project site(s) in September 2025 Summary of findings from pilot period to include proposed solutions for quality improvement 	September 2025 - December 2025
Five: Make the connection platform available throughout California	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final version ready to launch by March 2026 Monthly reports of maintenance activities Updates/enhancements as needed 	December 2025 - March 2026 <i>*Note: Phase Four overlaps with Phase Three to allow for data collection and iterative design during the pilot period.</i>
Six: Maintenance, monitoring, and expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly reports of maintenance activities Updates/enhancements as needed 	April 2026 - December 31, 2026

B. Functionality

CA Bridge anticipates the connection platform will need the following functionality.

Platform Goals

- Simple web-based, text-based, and voice-based user interface for participants to submit a request for MAT or access education about SUD, MAT, and harm reduction
- Simple web-based user interface for CA Bridge-affiliated navigators and SUD providers to communicate with each other about local resources and availability of services
- Simple web-based user interface for CA Bridge-affiliated SUD providers to access contact information for treatment-interested participants

Platform Expectations

- Ability to create automated workflows (e.g., notifications to users, automated routing based on different criteria)

- Ability to receive text messages, emails, and/or phone calls from users and respond via structured, automated actions and custom messages
- Ability to communicate updates and confirmations to participants, CA Bridge staff, and other users
- User management for authenticated users
- Industry-standard security, privacy, and compliance requirements
- Industry-standard code testing for quality assurance
- Ability to support multiple languages (internationalization)
- Compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA at minimum

Potential Integrations

- Productivity and collaboration software, e.g., Google workspace
- Client relationship management software, e.g., Zoho CRM
- Business intelligence software, e.g., Tableau
- Communication platform that enables integration of voice, messaging, and email
- Existing Slack workspace, which includes possible HIPAA-compliant sharing of participant information

Data

- Ability to collect personally identifiable information, such as first and last name, location, insurance type, and date of birth, in compliance with HIPAA
- Ability to collect data on participants who utilize the connection platform
- Logs for auditing and reporting purposes
- Ability to create customized reports on participation and usage
- Ability to create a real-time dashboard of platform activity, including participant status and navigator activity

C. Attachments

CA Bridge Connect Users Table

We anticipate having the following user groups use, share, or manage the connection platform. Please review [Attachment 1: CA Bridge Connect Users Table](#).

CA Bridge Connect Conceptual Workflows

We have developed two conceptual CA Bridge Connect workflows to provide a sense of how users may interact with the product. While not determinative, we are including these workflows here in order to assist with vendor response. Please review [Attachment 2: CA Bridge Connect Conceptual Workflow A](#) and [Attachment 3: CA Bridge Connect Conceptual Workflow B](#).

III. VENDOR QUALIFICATIONS

Minimum Qualifications

- Experience successfully building, implementing, and launching web-based, text, and voice capable platforms as described in Section B above
- Experience with UX design
- Experience developing products in compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)
- Expert knowledge of HIPAA compliance regulations and experience designing technical solutions that adhere to HIPAA regulations
- Experience with software integration as described in Section B above
- Experience building systems that include robust data collection and reporting mechanisms



- Experience building solutions that prioritize equity and serve populations made vulnerable through systemic under-resourcing
- Successful past performance in providing timely delivery of services and technical support

Preferred Qualifications

- Experience with California’s healthcare system, including Medi-Cal insurance
- Experience engaging prioritized communities to inform design and user experience
- Understanding of substance use disorder, medication for addiction treatment, and low-barrier clinics

IV. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND SUBMISSION

Compliance Requirements

PHI/CA Bridge is unable to issue an agreement to any entity that is listed with the General Services Administration as debarred or suspended.

Costs

PHI/CA Bridge will not reimburse costs associated with preparing or submitting proposals in response to this RFP or costs associated with possible contract negotiation.

Submission

PHI/Bridge invites interested vendors to submit a proposal. The proposal must include the following information and be submitted through our [online submission form](#).

Proposal Sections	Description
Vendor Profile: <i>Provide general organizational entity information.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Full vendor name, vendor website, and vendor address ○ Number of employees, number of years in business ○ Registered business address, entity type, federal employer identification number (FEIN), federal small business administration certification, state of registration, and registration or incorporation number
Key Personnel Experience: <i>Provide general information about staff who would support this project.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vendor’s designated representative for purposes of this RFP name, title, phone number, and email address ○ For each staff member who would be assigned to the project, name, title, role/brief biography (100 words or less), and level of effort (FTE) on this project ○ Total FTE available for this project
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide a summary highlighting your unique qualifications for this opportunity (no more than 1 page)
Proposed Timeline/Workplan: <i>Provide a high-level work plan, estimated timeline, and proposed deliverables.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Respond to the deliverables and timeline listed in Section II. A. Project Phases and Timeline ○ Vendor’s standard project approach, including any specific methodologies or tools ○ Include details on project management and implementation
Technical Capacity (Services): <i>Provide a description of the planned services and your process that demonstrates your technical capacity and understanding.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demonstrate the overall technical approach and the specific methodology that supports the project ○ Proposed software stack, if applicable ○ Proposed software for mockups/wireframes



Past Performance: <i>Provide support for experience that meets minimum qualifications.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Examples of similar tools or systems developed and launched ○ Examples of work featuring HIPAA compliance ○ Examples of how you have incorporated an equity perspective in previous work
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact information for at least three references from similar projects
Pricing for Phase One: <i>An exact quote for Phase One: Discovery and Planning.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A detailed line item budget showing total cost of the proposed services in Phase One ○ Each line item should include a budget justification
Estimated Pricing for Phase Two - Phase Six: <i>Estimated quote for Phase Two - Phase Six; can be modified upon the conclusion of Phase One.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Line items should include: development costs, proposed software, staff time, and fees
Acknowledgment of Attachment 4: CA Bridge Connect Sample Terms and Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Confirm you have reviewed the anticipated terms and conditions the final contract will have additional terms and conditions
Conflict of Interest: <i>Provide information regarding any potential conflict of interest.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disclose any conflict of interest or potential conflicts of interest

Hard copy proposals will not be accepted. **Proposals received after January 10, 2025 at 11:59 PM PT will not be considered.**

Questions

All questions concerning this RFP must be submitted via email to info@bridgetotreatment.org with the subject “CA Bridge Connect” no later than **December 11, 2024 at 11:59 PM PT**. PHI/CA Bridge will post responses to questions on the Bridge Center’s [opportunities page](#) by **December 20, 2024 at 11:59 PM PT**.

V. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND TIMELINE

Evaluation

PHI/CA Bridge will evaluate each proposal to determine responsiveness to the RFP requirements. Proposals that are complete and responsive will be submitted to an evaluation committee that will use a standard evaluation rubric. The scoring system will be on a scale from 1-5; details are provided below.

Evaluation Metrics	Maximum Points (Scale 1-5)
Technical Capacity: Proposals will be evaluated on technical capacity, understanding, and ability to meet the necessary functionality requirements.	5
Timeline/Workplan: Proposals will be evaluated on the feasibility, efficiency, and methodology of the timeline and workplan.	5
Past Experience and References: Proposals will be evaluated on the amount of relevant past experience.	5
Pricing for Phase One: Proposals will be evaluated in terms of cost-effectiveness and proposed	5



rate structure.	
-----------------	--

*Pricing for Phase Two-Phase Six will be reviewed but not weighed in the evaluation process.

PHI/CA Bridge’s Discretion

PHI/CA Bridge reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to cancel this RFP if it is in the best interest of PHI/CA Bridge to do so. Final vendor selection is subject to DHCS approval.

At PHI/CA Bridge’s discretion, the above evaluation criteria are subject to change to best meet programmatic needs and/or funder requirements.

PHI/CA Bridge has the right to obtain clarification of information collected through this RFP. PHI/CA Bridge may revise scores assigned in the initial evaluation based on clarification received from vendors.

Selection

PHI/CA Bridge evaluation committee will make the final vendor selection based on the evaluation criteria. PHI/Bridge plans to announce the vendor selection on **January 24, 2025**.

CA Bridge is committed to advancing social and racial justice through our work with healthcare systems. We value having a team that brings diverse perspectives to this work based on language, ethnicity, race, gender, socio-economic background, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and disability. We believe our team’s lived experiences and unique ideas inspire innovative solutions. Organizations led by people commonly under-represented, including people of color, LGBTQIA+ people, people with disabilities, and those with lived experience with substance use, are strongly encouraged to apply.

Timeline

PHI/CA Bridge aims to follow the timeline below for proposal review and vendor selection.

Event	Dates
PHI/CA Bridge releases RFP	November 26, 2024
Vendors submit questions by	December 11, 2024
PHI/CA Bridge releases responses/FAQs	December 20, 2024
Vendors submit proposals	January 10, 2025
PHI/CA Bridge announces selection	January 24, 2025

At PHI/CA Bridge’s discretion, the above timeline is subject to change to best meet programmatic needs and/or funder requirements.