

# Prospective Supplier

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

April 2024

## Prospective Supplier Overview

The Resource Group, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Ascension, is grateful that you are interested in working with us to achieve our mutual goal of providing the highest-quality care to patients at the lowest possible cost. The Resource Group operates both as a group purchasing organization (GPO) and a supply chain management solution. We strive to ensure that our supplier relationships are mutually beneficial and have created an operational model that embeds onsite resources to support contract commitment. After reviewing these frequently asked questions, if you still have a question, please submit it through our [Supplier Inquiry Tool](#) and we will strive to respond within five business days where feasible.

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

#### **What is The Resource Group's purpose?**

The Resource Group lowers the cost of healthcare through its User-Directed Integrated Solutions. We envision a tightly coordinated, end-to-end non-payroll spend management solution that continually improves our Participants' financial performance to sustain resources available for patient care.

#### **What is a Prospective Supplier?**

Any supplier who **has not been contracted** with The Resource Group and who desires to contract with our organization to do business with our Participants.

#### **What is a Participant?**

An organization that enters into a participation agreement, agrees to utilize The Resource Group's GPO contracts and supply chain management solution and appears on The Resource Group Participant Roster.

#### **How does my organization become a contracted supplier with The Resource Group?**

End-user decision-making groups choose the attributes necessary in a product or service, as opposed to choosing based on personal preference. The Resource Group contracts with those suppliers identified as having products and/or services that meet the defined attributes according to these end-user defined strategies.

Completing this [Prospective Supplier](#) form creates internal awareness of suppliers interested in having their products and/or services considered for contracting with The Resource Group. Suppliers who have completed the Prospective Supplier form may be included in future RFI/RFP activities and will be contacted by a Resource Group associate to initiate the RFI/RFP process if that is the case. Upon completing the Prospective Supplier form, you will receive a unique request number. Please keep the email that is generated after submitting your request as a reference document to demonstrate you have made your organization known to The Resource Group. If your organization is invited to an

RFI/RFP, you will want to share your Prospective Supplier intake confirmation with the Contract Administrator that reaches out. The Resource Group receives many prospective supplier requests each month from suppliers that want to do business with our Participants. Due to the high volume of interest, there will be no personal follow-up with the Prospective Supplier unless the products/services match a need expressed by one of the end-user decision making groups described in these FAQs.

### **I have completed the Prospective Supplier intake form, when will I receive a contract with The Resource Group?**

The Resource Group does not make any decisions to contract for products/services. The Resource Group facilitates all contracting decisions with the end-user decision making groups (referred to as Decision Teams and Affinity Groups) that determine the need for products/services by category. This is a strategic approach that allows for the impacted stakeholders to have a say on what is needed, and clinically or professionally acceptable, to support patient care for all Participants served.

### **Who is part of a Decision Team or Affinity Group?**

Affinity Groups are in place for high-dollar, high-volume specialty areas such as orthopedics, spine, and cardiac rhythm management and are made up of physicians.

Similarly, Decision Teams are in place for high volume products and services and include clinicians and other pertinent hospital personnel.

The end-users on Decision Teams and Affinity Groups guide the decision making process by identifying the required attributes in a product or service while considering best practices, safety, clinical or professional acceptability, and quality.

### **Do all Ascension contracts go through The Resource Group?**

All Ascension product/service contract requests (both national and local) are reviewed by The Resource Group to maximize value for our Participants.

### **Are diverse and/or small business suppliers able to contract with The Resource Group?**

Yes. We welcome all supplier types expressing interest in becoming a contracted supplier. Establishing business relationships with diverse suppliers and small business services is not only part of our mission and strategic business practice; we believe it is also a socially responsible action to support the Participants and communities we serve.

### **How do I connect with a live person at The Resource Group?**

Contacting us via our [Supplier Inquiry Tool](#) is the best option for prospective suppliers to get their questions answered in a timely manner.

**Do you share a contracting calendar so that suppliers know when a category will be up for review?**

No, this information is proprietary and is not shared with the supplier community. The Resource Group may review the prospective supplier interest list to determine if a supplier should be invited to the RFI/RFP process.

**My organization would like to go to a Participant site to determine interest in our products/services; how do we go about that?**

[The Resource Group serves as the primary point of contact for all suppliers and Prospective Suppliers desiring to do business with a Participant.] There are only five reasons for entry at our Participant sites:

1. Medical procedure/direct patient assistance
2. In-servicing/education that has been requested and scheduled in advance
3. Product, equipment, and facility maintenance
4. Inventory counting
5. Samples drop off

Unless the entry you are requesting falls into one of these categories, suppliers should not be on site for their personal safety and the safety of the patients that are being served. Please review and familiarize your organization with [Ascension's Vendor Access Policy](#) for further details.

**How does The Resource Group evaluate bids during the RFI/RFP process?**

All requests for information or proposals are requested by The Resource Group contract administrator assigned to the contracting category. The administrator evaluates the requests against the criteria established by the Decision Team or Affinity Group to determine what value the supplier is delivering. There are five equally weighted criteria for consideration:

- Patient satisfaction
- End-user satisfaction
- Clinical/safety considerations
- Mission, vision, values alignment
- Financial opportunity

Once the proposals have been evaluated, this information is taken back to the Decision Team or Affinity Group for their awareness and to make a decision on the contracting strategy. Note that special considerations are not given to suppliers based on end-user personal preferences or brand bias.