U.S. General Services Administration



GSA General Supplies and Services

MAS and Global Supply

INDUSTRY SYMPOSIUM

Bolstering Industry and Customer Connections

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Furniture Acquisition:

Attributes of a Good Offer Submission

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Request for Information (RFI) Process

- Monitor eBuy/SAM for opportunities
- Review RFI language and attachments
  - Answer any questions in the RFI
  - Provide feedback based on the requirements in the statement of work (SOW)
    - Meaningful responses (i.e. requirements that cannot be met)
      - Adjustment to requirements

Best time to raise questions

RFI Process

- Check system where RFQ will be released
- Company registration in Assist
  - Profile: MAS contract
  - Set to submit quotes
  - Current POC registration needs to be current
    - Disabled accounts cannot be solicited in Assist
    - POC must have access to the MAS contract
  - Authorized signer under the company profile
  - Contract registration

RFI Process Continued

- Ensure SAM registration is current
  - Novation
  - Renewal
  - Address change
  - SAM validation will be checked prior to the release of RFQ
    - Failure to validate the SAM record will prevent a contractor from receiving the RFQ

Request for Quote (RFQ) Process

- Identify mechanism to solicit interested parties
- Access the RFQ and all attachments
- Advantageous to submit any questions during Q&A (written only) period
  - Can often result in changes/updates to the SOW

READ THE RFQ

Technical Evaluation

- RFQ provides evaluation criteria
- Factors may include (but not limited to)
  - Go/No Go criteria
  - Technical compliance
  - Past performance
    - History with the acquisition center
    - CPARS
    - Examples
      - Similar in scope
      - Ensure the POC can be reached

Go/No Go Criteria

- NON-Manufacturer Rule (NMR) if applicable.
  - A small business MUST provide the products of domestic, small business manufacturers.
- Complete Bill of Materials
  - Missing or incomplete:
    - BOM without furniture codes
    - Other than pdf BOM
      - Accommodate the CrtI+F function
  - GSA Catalogs
    - Current approved GSA catalog and link
    - Including part numbers, pricing and any options quoted
  - Price form (Excel)

Price Evaluation

- GSA Catalogs and GSA Contract Terms & Conditions (T&Cs) are used for verification purposes.
  - Unit prices
  - Hourly labor rates
  - Discounts
- Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA)/BPA calls
  - Greater discounts and lower labor rates than shown on GSA T&Cs are welcome

Price Evaluation

- RFQ provides guidance
- Complete forms as instructed (i.e. format)
  - Full and open competition
  - Quote against an existing vehicle
- Additional discounts are requested
  - Provide the best discount in the initial quote
    - Impact on award decision

Do:

- Include the CO in all correspondence
- Take direction from the CO ONLY
- Contract holder should remain present through project completion
- Review the SOW and the RFQ thoroughly
- Educate dealer:
  - Ensure dealers quote IAW the MAS contract (product and services) for BPAs
  - Ensure dealers quote IAW the BPA (product and services) for BPA calls

Do – Continued:

- Price form
  - Submit best and final pricing
    - Offer additional discounts below the MAS schedule contract price
  - Ensure catalog links work
- Quoted Services
  - Always include:
    - Number of hours per laborer
    - Total number of hours
    - Rate
  - Specifically on final BOMs and additional items
- Double check math

Don't:

- Wait until the day/hour the RFQ closes to submit a quote
  - System access/Assist helpdesk
    - A log will be provided to the CO
- Wait for the RFQ to state your company cannot meet the requirements
- Quote below the BPA discount for BPA calls
- Submit identical quotes
- Submit pdf files that cannot accommodate the Crtl+F function
- Change BOM line items unless the CO finds it to be deficient
- Omit the CO from correspondence

Award Intention

- Best case: Award on the initial quote
  - Time efficient
  - Benefit all parties
- Otherwise, multiple revisions have an impact on all parties:
  - Costly
  - Additional resources
  - Lengthen procurement and project schedule
    - Customer impact
      - Financial implications

Revised Quotes

- Technical/Price Quote
  - Highlight changes
  - Notate and submit any changes to the SOW as a result
  - Do not change items unless there are questions
    - If another change affects a line, highlight the change
    - If an item met the requirement initially, another evaluation of the item should not be conducted
    - Increases the time for the evaluation process

Design Process/Final BOM

- Kickoff meeting → customer, contractor/dealers
- CAD file
- Site visit - space MUST be substantially complete
- Fabric & finish selection by agency
- Any changes that arise during design shall be notated on the SOW
- Final BOM inclusive of panel sharing
- Review and approval of Final BOM
  - Manufacturing order submission

Lessons Learned

- Read requirements
  - RFI stage:
    - Ask questions
    - Provide feedback (can/can't meet the SOW)
- Changes to requirements cause delays in the process
  - Design changes MUST be communicated to the CO
    - Revision to SOW
- Communication is key
- Mission is to serve federal agencies with cost-effective, high-quality products and services

Furniture Types – Part 1

- Workstations
  - Panels – Fabric, HPL, Metal, and White Board
  - Fixed and Adjustable Worksurfaces
  - Storage – Pedestals, Overheads, Wardrobes, etc.
- Benching Workstations
  - Benching Frame System
  - Worksurfaces
  - Screens and Modesty Panels
- Private Offices
  - Fixed and Adjustable Worksurfaces
  - Storage – Pedestals, Overheads, Wardrobes, etc.

Furniture Types – Part 2

- Technical Work Bench
  - Fully Welded Frame System
  - Worksurfaces – ESD-Controlled Laminate and Wood Butcher Block
  - Accessories – Lighting, Power, Wire Management, etc.
  - Storage – Mobile Pedestal and Shelving
- High Density Storage System
  - Electric and manually operated systems
- Demountable Walls
  - Walls shall be available in Glass, Laminate or Veneer, Fabric, Metal and Whiteboard Panels
  - Doors – Swing and Sliding

Furniture Types – Part 3

- Accessories
  - Task Lights – Undercabinet and Freestanding
  - Keyboard Trays
  - Monitor Arms – Single and Dual Arm
  - Power Modules
- Seating
  - Task Chairs and Stools
  - Metal and Wood Guest Chairs
  - Multipurpose Chairs – Standard, Counter & Bar Height
  - Nesting Chair
  - Banquettes
  - Lounge Seating – Chair, Sofa, Swivel, High Back, etc.

Furniture Types – Part 4

- Tables
  - Conference Tables – HPL and Veneer
  - Multipurpose Tables – Standard, Counter & Bar Height
  - Media Tables – Ability to add a screen by others
  - Nesting Tables – HPL and Veneer
  - Coffee and End Tables – HPL and Veneer
  - Laptop Tables – Laminate or Solid Surface
- Meeting & Touchdown Spaces
  - Lectern – HPL and Veneer
  - Credenza – HPL and Veneer
  - Mobile Privacy Screens – Tackable Fabric
  - Tackboards – Tackable Fabric
  - Markerboards – White Markerboard and Glass

Furniture Types – Part 5

- Open Area Storage
  - Lateral Files
  - Bookcases
  - Storage Cabinets
  - Common Tops – Single-sided and Back-to-back
  - Flat Files
  - Industrial Shelving – Heavy Duty Steel Construction
  - Lockers

Items not included in our requirements

- Office Seating and Tables
- Clocks, Waste Receptacles, Coat Hangers
- Electronics (Monitors, Printers, Etc.)
- Appliances (Microwaves, Dishwashers, Refrigerators, Etc.)
- Office Supplies (Markers, Erasers, Etc.)
- Ceiling Track Room Dividers
- Plumbing Fixtures/Dispensers (Sinks, Water Coolers, Etc.)
- Carpet and Area Rugs
- Door Mounted Coat Hooks

Request for Information (RFI)

- The requirements have been reviewed by the agency and are 95% complete at this point.
- This is the time to ask any questions and let us know if you cannot meet any of the requirements!
- For your quote to be technically acceptable you need to meet all requirements listed in the RFQ and SOW.
- During an open procurement it is difficult to address any specific issues.
- During the Request for Quote (RFQ) phase all questions and answers will be shared with all parties who have expressed in the solicitation.

Typicals

- Submit drawings in Plan View and 3D View for all typical codes on the price form in PDF format.
  - Workstation Typicals
  - Benching Workstation Typicals
  - Private Office Typicals
  - Technical Work Bench Typicals
  - High Density Storage System Typicals
  - Demountable Wall Typicals
- Full colored renderings are not required.
- Black and White line drawings are acceptable.

Bill of Materials (BOM)

- Searchable PDF Format – Ctrl+F Function
- Include **ALL** Item Codes from Price Form
- All Item codes shall have a quantity of 1
- Include Catalog Name and Page Number
- Open Market items shall be noted on BOM
- Customized products shall include a base part number included as well as a detailed description of the customized part in the BOM
- Multiple BOM submissions (or options) for an item code will not be reviewed. Only the item that matches the price from the price form will be reviewed for technical compliance.

GSA Catalogs

- Searchable PDF Format – Ctrl+F (Control Find) Function
- Catalogs shall be uploaded with quote package
- Catalog links are permitted and should be provided in the Catalog Key Tab of the Price Form
- Catalog shall be the most current GSA Catalog
- Entire Catalogs shall be submitted, single pages of catalogs or partial catalogs are not permitted.
- Catalogs shall include Part Numbers, Pricing, and any applicable options to the standard product being quoted.

If the catalog does not show how the product meets all the requirement, additional documentation must

Environmental Certificates – Part 1

- Tier 1
  - ANSI/BIFMA e3 Furniture Sustainability Standard (Minimum Level 1)
  - Cradle to Cradle Certified
  - GECA Furniture, Fittings, and Foam
  - TUV Rheinland Green Product Mark

- Tier 2
  - SCS Indoor Advantage Gold
  - Greenguard Certification
  - MAS Certifed Green
  - Declare – CDPH Compliant
  - Intertek VOC+

Environmental Certificates – Part 2

- Tier 3
  - If the following furniture codes do not meet ONE of the Tier 1 or Tier 2 Non-Federal, Multi-Attribute Standards and Ecolabels for each product line quoted in support of this requirement, they shall demonstrate the product is produced using sound environmental practices.

- Meeting ANSI/BIFMA e3 Credits 7.6.1, 7.6.2, 7.6.3 is not the equivalent of being Level Certified.
- Tables with power requierments only need Tier 3 for the power.
- Storage with digital lock with power requirements only need Tier 3 for the digital lock.

Dimensions

- All dimensions are approximate within +/- 1” of the dimension indicated, inclusive of dimension ranges, unless one or more of the following applies:
  - Specification states “unless noted otherwise”
  - Dimensions stated as “minimum” or “maximum”

The tolerance might seem small, but the specifications include ranges to not limit competition

- Frameless Topper shall be 6”-12”H.
- Transaction Surface shall be 12”-16”D.
- Privacy Screen shall extend 10”-20” above the worksurface.

Finish Grades

- For comparable pricing evaluation purposes, all upholstery shall be quoted as mid-grade, based on each manufacturer's available upholstery grades as indicated in their product catalog. Examples:
  - 3, 4, or 5 on a sequential scale of 1-7
  - C, D, or E on a sequential scale of A-G
  - 4, 5, 6, or 7 on a sequential scale of 1-10
  - D, E, F, or G on a sequential scale of A-J

- If the available upholstery grades deviate from those shown in the product catalog, appropriate documentation shall be provided to support the mid-grade upholstery requirement.

Finishes: Pre-Award – Part 1

- Pre-Award
  - Workstation Panel Material
    - *Fabric, Laminate, Metal, etc.*
  - Workstation Topper Panels
    - *Clear or Frosted*
  - Work Surface and Table Top Material
    - *Laminate or Veneer*
  - Storage Material
    - *Metal, Laminate, or Veneer*

Finishes: Pre-Award – Part 2

- Pre-Award
  - Modesty or Privacy Panel Material
    - *Frosted, Fabric, Laminate, etc.*
  - Seating Material
    - *Upholstery, Plastic, Wood, etc.*
  - Seating Upholstery
    - *Fabric, Mesh, Vinyl, Leather, etc.*

Finishes: Post Award

- Post-Award
  - Laminate
    - *Solid, Pattern, Wood, etc.*
  - Veneer
    - *Species and Finish*
  - Metal
    - *Paint Selection*
  - Plastic
    - *Color Selection*
  - Fabric, Mesh, Vinyl, and Leather
    - *Finish Selection*

Best Practices

- Lowest Price **Technically Acceptable**
  - To be considered Technically Acceptable you must meet all criteria and requirements of the RFQ and SOW
- Check your links
  - Check that all links take you to the correct location, but also that the link is clickable when converted to a PDF
- Keep it simple
  - Fancy graphics are nice, but are not necessary. They can slow down already very large PDF files
- Only give us what we are asking for
  - Sending documents that are not necessary can lead to confusion during evaluation

More Best Practices

- Part Numbers must match
  - The part number in the catalog must match **exactly** what is in the BOM. If this is not possible, just note it on the BOM.
- Highlight!
  - If a revised quote is required due to discussions, please highlight any deviations from the original BOM
- All deficiencies must be addressed
  - If a revised quote is required due to Discussion, all items in the Discussion Letter must be addressed
- Dropbox.com, File Transfer Protocol (FTP) sites & ZIP Files
  - The government **cannot** access any of these

Resources

GSA Advantage

Acquisition Gateway

Furniture & Furnishing Category

Email to furniture@gsa.gov

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