

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

RFP NO. FIN010111CK

Statewide Office Supplies, Paper and Toner

August 10, 2012

1. Question: Section 1.3 Page 2 states that “the AOC intends to award one or more Master Agreements, in whole or in part”. Could the AOC please provide more clarity as to how it would consider awarding the contract in part? For example, will the AOC consider breaking up the bid by the categories on separate tabs on the separate tabs on the price file?

Answer: Unless otherwise specified in the bid, the AOC may accept any item or combination of items, as specified in the bid, of any proposal unless the bidder expressly restricts an item or combination of items in its proposal and conditions its response on receiving all items for which it provided a bid.

2. Question: Will the AOC consider splitting the award based on office supplies category and awarding the non contract discount items in the same category to another vendor?

Answer: Award will be made to the vendor who provides the best overall value based to the JBEs and AOC.

3. Question: Would the AOC please provide more specifics on the evaluation process, including the value placed on the core items versus the catalog items? Please discuss if there are other evaluated items and how they will score in the bid.

Answer: The value will be placed on the core items. Also as stated in the IFB, any material exceptions to the Standard Terms and Conditions will render the bids as non responsive.

4. Question: Could the AOC please provide the usage per item in order to allow the vendors to more accurately respond to the bid?

Answer: The AOC cannot provide usage per item as this is a new list of items, different from the previous contracted items.

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5. Question: Could the AOC provide the total annual spend for the past 12 months for this contract.

Answer: Same response as question 4.

6. Question: Could the AOC provide the total annual spend for all of the listed items on the price file per tab for the last 12 months.

Answer: Same response as question 4.

7. Question: Price file: Excel line 1048: it asks for one “Non-Contract item Discount for Office Supplies”. In an effort to provide the most competitive pricing to AOC, please consider the following short list of common/universal categories for non-core discounts: Office Supplies, Private-brand office supplies, furniture, technology, other. Inclusion of this list will ensure unrelated product groups will not be blended to the detriment of your contract pricing. This maintains simplicity while maximizing contract discounts.

Answer: No. The discounts are for office supplies, paper, and toner. The resulting contract will only be for office supplies, paper and toner. No other categories will be included.

8. Question: Price file – Excel line 1048: We suggest that the AOC request from each vendor the catalog item to be submitted with each item identified within the appropriate category, category discount offered and net pricing to the AOC. This will provide the AOC a clear evaluation of which is offering the best overall pricing.

Answer: Vendors should fill in the information in Attachment 3 provided in this IFB.

9. Question: Price file Excel line 1048: We further suggest that, in order to allow the AOC the ability to evaluate the respondents pricing accurately, the AOC not allow for any type of cost or margin flooring. For example, here is a possible impact if such a floor was allowed: A vendor indicates they will provide 70% off a category list and the list price of an item is \$10.00, the AOC would expect to pay \$3.00 for that item. If the cost and/or margin floor stopped that discount at 40%, the actual price would be \$6.00, a 100% increase in the

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anticipated price. There is no way to truly evaluate catalog or non-core pricing if a floor is allowed with the exception of a complete net price list of all items offered under the contract.

Answer: The pricing shall remain as is.

10. Question: Cost information of the IFB document: It states “The cost per unit for the goods described in the non-cost information.” Can we assume that the AOC wants all pricing to reflect the unit of measure as stated in the Attachment 3, the price file regardless of how the items are packaged for the particular brand each respective vendor offers? It might be better if the AOC includes a column for the alternate products offered that would allow the vendor to indicate the unit of measure per pack. For example, if the price file has a pack of notepads and the unit of measure is 6 n notepads per pack and the vendor sells their comparable brand in a package of 12, the vendor can state the pack if for 12 while also providing the net price per unit based on 6 in a pack. This addition will allow the AOC to easily evaluate for best value, without calculating for various pack quantities from the vendors.

Answer: Yes we want all pricing to reflect the unit of measure as stated in the Attachment 3 and included in the spreadsheet are extra columns where you can put alternates.

11. Question: Price file and 1.3 of Attachment 2-toner and ink cartridges: The AOC provided column H for alternative products on the toner tab. There really is no such thing as a compatible alternative brand that is made completely with brand new materials. In this category, there tend to only OEM toners or remanufactured toners of varying qualities. Are we allowed to provide remanufactured toners for the OEM toners? For the OEM toners and inks listed on the file, are we to bid both? Please clarify.

Answer: Per Attachment 2, Section 1.3: Technical Specifications for remanufactured Toner Cartridges: Remanufactured toner cartridges must be fully remanufactured to specifications equal to or exceeding original equipment manufacturers (OEM) cartridge standards of quality and performance. In addition to the basic remanufacturing process defined below, remanufactured toner cartridges shall meet or exceed the latest remanufactured toner cartridge standards adopted by the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM).

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12. Question: Terms and Conditions Attachment 4 you have requested a 2-year hold on pricing for all product categories including paper, ink and toner. Section 6.2ii “cost information” references compatible rates for other government agencies. May we suggest a separate pricing schedule for paper, ink and toner only to ensure competitive pricing comparisons and to eliminate the need to “pad” anticipated cost increases for these volatile product categories?

Answer: No.

13. Question: Terms and conditions Attachment 4: Please allow respondents to use manufacturer’s global letters to vendors notifying them of price increases. These letters will more accurately provide the AOC with actual manufacturer price changes that took the place of specific item or category level, while the referenced price index will not.

Answers: Bidders must submit a bid based on the requirements and terms and conditions stated in the IFB.

14. Question: Terms and Conditions Attachment 4: Would the AOC please change the terms for contract extensions to be mutually agreed to between the AOC and the vendor of record?

Answer: Yes.

15. Question: Please provide your average order size so we can accurately estimate our service related costs.

Answer: This information is not available.

16. Question: Should the average order size be below the generally accepted industry standard of \$50.00, would the AOC consider implementing a minimum order value to save both the customer and the supplier exceptionally high costs? Generally speaking, small orders are costly for customers to process, often more than the item(s) itself due to the labor involved with processing each order. Most resulting contracts today include this component to improve upon the impact on environmental goals for the State by reducing small frequent order deliveries across the State.

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Answer: The AOC will be open to discussions upon contract award.

17. Bid Contents: It states “Model number(s), specifications, or other description of the goods bidder proposes to supply to the AOC, including warranty information.” The provision of including the warranty information on the pricing file for each item – is that valid for this bid? Could the AOC please drop this language and allow vendors to simply commit to passing along and all manufacturers’ warranties to the AOC and its customers? We will also state in our response that, upon notification by customer, we will assist in obtaining the full warranty resolution.

Answer: Per Section 6.1.c: Model number(s), specifications, or other description of the goods Bidder proposes to supply to the AOC, including warranty information.

18. Question: What is your approximate annual spend?

Answer: Please see refer to question # 4.

19. Where would you like us to sign the documents for both cost and non-cost files?

Answer: On Attachment 3.

20. Question: Does the CDROM need to be in an envelope or does it need to be labeled in a certain way?

Answer: Per the IBF the non cost information must be packaged with the hard copies and the pricing must be packaged with the pricing portion of the RFP. They should be labeled with company name and IFB #.

21. Question: Do you need a price file of non-core items? If so, does it need to match the core item file?

Answer: Yes.

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22. Question: Section 6.4, can you clarify if you need a custom catalog? If so, what needs to be included in that catalog?

Answer: The catalog would include, but not be limited to the following: Item, part number, description, price and unit of measure.

23. Question: Attachment 3, if we do not have access to a specific item, how would you like us to notate that information?

Answer: Bidder can notate that the item is not available next to the item in the pricing attachment.

24. Question: Attachment 2, Section 4.0. Are there any special requirements for delivery including dock, inside delivery, desk top delivery?"

Answer: All JBEs have different delivery requirements and this information is not available.

25. Question: Will compatible toner cartridges (new generic) be considered for award?

Answer: Per Attachment 2, Section 1.3: Technical Specifications for remanufactured Toner Cartridges: Remanufactured toner cartridges must be fully remanufactured to specifications equal to or exceeding original equipment manufacturers (OEM) cartridge standards of quality and performance. In addition to the basic remanufacturing process defined below, remanufactured toner cartridges shall meet or exceed the latest remanufactured toner cartridge standards adopted by the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM).

26. Question: Will the award for toner cartridges be line-by-line or all-or none?

Answer: All or none.

27. Question: Does the vendor have to bid on both OEM and compatible/remanufactured to be considered for award:

Answer: No.

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28. Question: Inside deliveries was mentioned in the bid. Can you please specify which JBE locations will require inside delivery? Also please elaborate on your definition of inside delivery please?

Answer: Please see response to question 4.

29. Are certifications such as woman owned or SBE organizations important to JBE? Does having any of these certifications allow us to be considered "priority" from other bids?

Answer: The AOC follows the intent of the executive Branch programs and the participation goal of 3%; however the evaluation criterion does not include special consideration for these programs or small business enterprises. Award will be made to the vendor who provides the best overall value based on the evaluation criteria set forth in the IFB.

30. Question: If you were to rank pricing and service as #1 or #2 in the two top priorities would rank higher?

Answer: Please see question 3.

31. Question: Is a usage list for the contract items in question a possibility?

Answer: Please see question #4.

32. Question: I didn't notice many "toners" on the pricing schedule. Is there a separate toner list?

Answer: Pricing for toner is included in the second tab of Attachment 3.

33. Question: How many locations will require inside delivery?

Answer: Please see question 4.

34. Question: We noticed that the last estimated supply volume report was run Nine Month Period in Fiscal year 2008/2008. Is there a more recent run report of volume for the Office Supplies, Paper and Toner contract?

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Answer: Please see question 4.

35. Question: We are wondering if you will be accepting bids for remanufactured and compatible products which meet or exceed OEM specifications.

Answer: Please see question 25.

36. There were questions asked after the day in which questions were due, July 27th per Section 3.0 of this IFB and thus will not be answered.