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RFP 14-16 Questions and Answers

1. We are a printing company that specializes in Admission Tickets and Parking Hangtags & Decals. Are we able to submit under RFP 14-16 School Supplies or RFP14-17 Office Supplies...

No. Please refer to pages 27-28 in the RFP.

2. Can you tell me when the pre-bid is scheduled for School Supplies. We have travel arrangement to make.

A pre-bid conference has not been scheduled for this RFP.

3. I am currently working on your School Supplies bid which opens on 10/8/2014. I require the previous bid recap (bid tabulation) which would need to include the winning price, winning brand, and the winning dealer.

All current contract documentation including bid tabulations are available publicly on the current contract holders' vendor pages at TCPN.org. Winning brand and winning price information are not available for the current contract.

4. The email notification came with an attached excel spreadsheet called “RFP 14-16 for School Supplies Attachment B - Core and Non-Core List Offering”. On the spreadsheet it says “Respondents' Core List MUST contain at least 250 items in order to be considered responsive.” I am not sure what is meant by Core and Non-Core. If “Core” refers to the items listed in RFP 14-16 Attachment A - Market Basket Survey, we do not sell any of those items, so we would only be offering Non-Core items (we publish supplemental textbooks). Therefore I’m not sure if I should submit at all.

"Core List" refers to a vendor's main offering list. As stated on the Market Basket Survey, the Core List does not have to correspond to the items requested in the Market Basket Survey. It is the responsibility of vendors to determine whether or not to submit a response to this RFP.

5. On p. 28 of the RFP, it states the following: Ordering Capabilities Vendor shall have an electronic on-line catalogue, including shopping cart capabilities, for order entry use by Region 4 ESC and TCPN members. Features will include: product lookup that shows TCPN contract price; ability to set purchasing authorization limits; ability to download order and invoice history reports. Our company is not able to comply with this requirement at this time. We do have a website and you can place an order through the site, but we don’t have true e-commerce and can’t provide the features you’re looking for. Again, does this mean I should not submit a bid for this RFP?

It is the responsibility of vendors to determine whether or not to submit a response to this RFP.

6. As a follow-up to the question that has been posted by another vendor, is it expected/anticipated that a pre-bid meeting will be held for the Office (14-17) and/or the School (14-16) Solicitations?

No. If a pre-bid conference is scheduled, vendors who have requested the affected RFP will be notified immediately.

7. We sell textbooks, classroom literature and workbooks. Are these items specifically included in the K12 Curriculum part of the bid; or would there be a different bid we would need to participate in?

Vendors should read the Products and Services section of the RFP and determine for themselves whether or not they feel they can respond.

8. Under the current calendar of events, final questions are due to TCPN by Wednesday, October 1, 2014. Final responses are due five business days after the final due date of questions. Our concern is that we may not have enough time to properly respond once answers to final questions are posted at some point within that five day period. For solicitations of the size of these, we request that the Deadline for the Receipt of Questions be moved up to an earlier date, possibly September 24, 2014. This would allow all Offerors an appropriate amount of time to respond to the final answers that may be presented.

The calendar of events will remain as is for the time being. If any questions or answers are posted that may materially affect either the solicitation or vendors' responses to it, Region 4 will consider moving the bid opening date back to allow appropriate time for making changes.

9. Clarification on Appendix C Pricing in Conjunction with Attachment B - Core/Non-Core List Price Template is requested. Appendix C of both solicitations reads: "Respondents must submit a response to the market basket survey contained in Attachment A as well as a complete core list of items listed in Attachment B. A list of discounts off list price for non-core items is also required." While Attachment B reads: "Offerors may indicate discounts for broad categories of Non-core items if they wish, however those discounts should still be applied to individual items on this list. If there is a discrepancy, this list shall govern."

- a. Is it required that pricing for Non-Core items be based solely on discounts from list price by categories?
- b. If yes, is there any limitation to the number of categories that can be specified?
- c. If Non-Core items are priced by discounts, can the Vendor make the final determination of the categories that products fall within?
- d. As an alternative, can Offeror choose to provide net-pricing for non-core items

as a pricing methodology, instead of discounts from list price by categories?

e. If net-pricing is allowed for Non-Core items is it then acceptable to list the discount percentage that results from this methodology, however, any discounts indicated are merely for notation purposes since that is not the methodology that Offeror used to create their non-core pricing?

f. If net-pricing is allowed for Non-Core items is it acceptable to insert “net price” in the “TCPN Discount” column of the worksheet?

g. On Attachment B, is it expected that the Offeror’s List Price would be inserted in the column that says “Unit Net Price”?

a) Vendors may offer alternative pricing methods for their non-core list as long as the proposed pricing method is auditable and not based on a Cost-Plus model.

b) If a vendor chooses to respond with a discount off list price based on category, they are free to define categories. However, it must be made clear by the vendor in their proposal what category any given item would fall under.

c) Determination of what category items fall within will be dictated by what vendors put forth in their proposal.

d) Yes.

e) Yes.

f) Yes.

g) Yes.

10. Article 2- Anticipated Term of Agreement Sections 2.1 and 2.2- Section 2.1 seems to indicate that the initial term will be for 3 years with a potential for 1 two year extension. Please explain with specificity what the last sentence of Section 2.2 means when it states that “Region 4 ESC reserves the right to exercise each two-year extension annually”. Does this contract have an initial term of three years with the potential for one two year extension for a potential total of 5 years, or, does this section provide for something other than this?

Any contracts resulting from this solicitation will have an initial term of three (3) years with the potential for two one (1) year renewals, for a possible final term of five (5) years.

11. Please confirm if the bid opening is public for anyone to attend and please also confirm the bid opening location, address, room #, etc.

The bid opening is public. The bid opening time and location listed in the RFP are correct. The bid opening is scheduled to be held in Room 202.

12. Please verify the definition of the following: Market Basket, Core Item, Non-Core Item

The Market Basket Survey represents usage on the current contract. As stated in Attachment A, vendors do not need to respond to every item in order to be considered for award, and may substitute equivalent items. A core item is an item on a vendor's core list of products for which a vendor will offer the steepest discounts. A non-core item is an item on a vendor's non-core list for which a vendor will offer a certain discount. The core and non-core lists should represent a vendor's entire offering. The market basket survey will be used to show how a vendor's offering (the core and non-core lists) will benefit Region 4 and the membership in actual practice.

13. Section 5.3 (page 18) mentions "failure to deliver goods or services within the time specified, or within a reasonable time period as interpreted by the purchasing agent.."

Section 7.1 Delivery (page 19) states" vendor shall deliver said materials purchased on this contract to the Member issuing a purchase order. Conforming products shall be shipped within 7 days of receipt of purchase order."

Section 8.5 Service Level Reports (page 20) indicates on time delivery rates as "number of orders delivered complete within the 2 business day requirement divided by the total number of orders delivered."

Shipping & Delivery (page 28) "orders of stocked products, within standard delivery areas, will be shipped within 48 hours of receipt of order.

Could you specify TCPN/ ESC 4's expectation for delivery in terms of number of days for the product(s) to ship, and (separately) the maximum number of days it may take for an order to be delivered to the shipping location? The varying language in these sections presents confusion on the TCPN/ESC4 delivery expectations.

Region 4 ESC's expectation is that orders of stocked products, within standard delivery areas, will be shipped within 48 hours of receipt of order.

14. If all items offered by a vendor will receive the same discount, should this column be completed as CORE or NON-CORE?

In this case, the items should be included as the CORE list.

15. Will this contract be used by districts in any ESC Regions outside of Region 4?

Yes, Region 4 ESC intends for contract(s) resulting from this RFP to be available nationally through the cooperative.
