



DIVISION OF FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

ADDENDUM #1

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) # 2480

Date: June 8, 2021

Subject: Clarification & Due Date Change

Title: Online Auctioneer

Due Date: June 9th, 2021 at 2:00 PM, EST
June 18th, 2021 at 2:00 PM, EST

Address Responses to: Nathan Baum
Division of Financial Administration
NYS Office of General Services
32nd Floor, Corning Tower
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12242
RFI# 2480

Clarification of Project Background:

C1. Questions were submitted in regards to this Request for Information.

Q1. Our records indicate a similar RFI was released in 2017. Was an RFP issued after information was gathered for that RFI?

- a. If so, who was the select vendor for that RFP?
- b. If no RFP was released after the 2017 RFI, what has been OGS's process for the past four years for auction of property and vehicles?

A1. There have been no competitive procurements that have been released for Online Auctioneer Services since the RFI was released in 2017. Since that time, OGS has used a combination of Live/Virtual Auctioneer Services to facilitate these services.

Q2. Do assets all flow through OGS at the state level?

- a. Or, are local NY agencies and municipalities allowed to adopt the state contract vehicle and work directly with the vendor?

A2. Executive agencies are only required to surplus vehicles through OGS. Any contract we may enter into will be for the sole use of OGS.

Q3. Are assets currently being reallocated around the state between agencies?

a. If so, what is that process?

b. Does OGS have a separate website platform to manage those assets that don't go to auction?

A3. Per State Finance Law Section 167, assets purchased with general funds are offered to state agencies for 7 days and then towns / municipalities for an additional 7 days. OGS currently hosts an intranet site where these assets are made available to these entities for the required timeframe.

Revisions

R1. The due date for this request for information has been extended to June 18th.

If your company has already submitted a response, please feel free to submit a revised response if you wish.

**New York State
Office of General Services**

**Request for Information (RFI) # 2480
Online Auctioneer Services**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Information and Purpose

The Office of General Services, Division of Financial Administration – Agency Procurement Office (OGS), is exploring development of a solicitation for online auctioneer services for its Surplus Property program. OGS seeks to obtain opinions from qualified online auction companies as to the industry standards. OGS desires to gain a better understanding of what would make this more attractive to potential bidders.

OGS will consider the information received from this RFI when drafting any future solicitation for online auctioneer services.

Vendors interested in participating in any possible future opportunities arising from this RFI are encouraged to respond.

1.2 Project Background

OGS is considering issuance of a Request for Proposals (RFP) that may be released in the near future for online auctioneer services.

OGS currently facilitates the redistribution of vehicles and personal property for various agencies throughout New York State, which may result in the release of vehicles or personal property items for sale. These items have traditionally been sold in a combination of online, virtual, and live in-person auctions at various locations throughout the state.

This program has traditionally brought in over \$7 million in revenue per calendar year from a combination of these auctions. Contractors for the vehicle auctions have been obligated to deposit the total gross proceeds from an auction into a State account, and then once certain administrative obligations have been met, the State then proceeds to pay the auctioneer fees and percentages based upon agreed rates.

2. DESIRED KNOWLEDGE

OGS seeks to gain a comprehensive understanding of the online auction process. For this reason, we need further information regarding industry standard policies and practices. To that end, OGS seeks responses to the following:

General Questions:

1. Is it standard for most auctioneers to offer a dedicated support representative?

2. Are there any recognized credentials in the industry that potential contractors should have?
3. Do online auction companies perform federal, state, or municipal auctions? If so, how do they traditionally differ than regular auctions?
4. Is it standard practice in this industry to also provide live in-person auctioneer services in addition to online auction services?
5. Is it standard practice for auctioneer companies to have an in-house advertising department? Explain types of advertising used to promote auctions.
6. Traditionally are all the services available from a single vendor? Or would multiple vendors or subcontractors be required?
7. Are there industry standard Terms & Conditions? Can a seller implement individual T&Cs as necessary?

Handling of Vehicles:

8. Is it standard practice for an auctioneer company to take possession of the vehicle prior to the online auction?
9. For auctioneers who take possession of vehicles:
 - a. Is shipping available?
 - b. Do most online vehicle auctioneers have a mechanic on staff to verify the condition as written of the vehicles, or to confirm that the vehicles conform to a required specification (e.g., that all State markings/ aftermarket parts have been taken off the vehicles)?
10. Do companies traditionally provide the descriptions and take photos of the vehicles to be used in the sale? Or do they need to come from the entity requesting the auction?
11. Is it standard practice to indicate in the descriptions online as to whether or not a vehicle has a MV-907a designation or if it has been labeled 'parts only', 'non-rebuildable', 'non-repairable', 'scrapped', or 'destroyed'?
12. Do companies traditionally allow people to view the vehicles in person prior to the start of the auction?
13. Is it standard practice for most auctioneers to handle the transfer of ownership including title transfers and keys?
14. Is it standard for most auctioneers to check and correct vehicles with open recalls?

Handling of Personal Property:

15. What is the typical quantity of items that can be sold in one sale? Can items be sold in lots or single?
16. What types of items can be sold online? (e.g. furniture, office supplies, lawn mowers, heavy equipment, computer equipment)
17. Are there any items that cannot be sold online? (e.g. certain types of medical equipment, software)
18. Can name brands be used in the listing description?

Auction Specific Processes:

19. Is it possible for auctioneer companies to offer viewings to State Agencies and Municipalities prior to selling items to the public?
20. Can single auctions be created with only one seller's merchandise or is all merchandise by all sellers combined?
21. What is the standard length or timeline of an online auction?

22. Is it possible to have a reserve on certain items that potential bidders must meet in order for the sale to proceed?
23. Do online auction companies accept Proxy Bids?
24. Is there a feature to block/suspend bidders? – If yes, what is the process?
25. Is it standard practice for an auction company to have an established Qualified Bidder Base?
26. What is the industry standard for creating listings?
 - a. Are listings created manually or with a data upload?
 - b. Can location links, names, and/or contact information be put into listings?
 - c. Can additional certification requirements be added to listings?
 - d. Is there a character limit for the title or product description?
 - e. Are there any photo limitations for listings? (e.g. size, quantity)
 - f. Are best practices or training provided for listing guidelines?
27. What is the standard practice for items that don't sell?
28. What is the industry standard for customers to leave feedback after a transaction is complete?
29. Is there method for sellers to communicate with buyers on the site?
30. How are disputes handled? (e.g. If a customer complains about condition or discrepancies in the listing will the online auction company give the seller the right to decide if a refund will be granted?)
31. How are exports distributed? (e.g. PDF, Excel)

Financial Transactions:

32. What is the industry standard for securing personal and financial information?
33. What is the standard practice for handling the proceeds of an online auction?
34. What is the industry standard for returning funds to the seller?
35. What is the industry standard for charging the seller to post and sell items?
36. Are discounts traditionally available to sellers based on specific volume or proceeds?
37. What, if any, costs are traditionally deferred to the buyer? (e.g. registering to bid, submitting a bid, buyer's premium)
38. Do most auction companies require a down payment by any winning bidders prior to full payment?
39. What is the standard maximum time that a buyer should have between winning the auction and submitting the payment to your company?
40. What is the process if the original buyer does not provide payment within the required amount of time?
41. What types of payment are traditionally accepted?
 - a. Is there a limit on credit card transactions?
 - b. Can multiple credit cards be used on the same transaction?
 - c. How are high-dollar value transactions handled?
42. What is the industry standard for collecting Tax Exempt forms, including out-of-state buyers?
43. What is the industry standard for handling bidders who are both Tax Exempt and Tax Eligible?
44. How long are transaction and financial records as well as bidder information (e.g. Tax Exempt Verification) maintained?
45. What is the industry standard for following individual state's tax laws?

Vendors are encouraged to be both comprehensive and creative when providing information related to this RFI. The State understands there are a host of potential solutions and it expects equal consideration be given to other options available in the marketplace. You may give information as to industry standards or to your company's practices as well. As such, vendors are permitted to submit responses, either in whole or in part, and / or in collaboration with other vendors.

3. CONTENT OF RESPONSE

OGS requests that vendors include the following types of information in their written responses:

- Company Background – Provide general background information regarding your company, including a summary of previous experience in similar types of projects.
- Potential Solutions – Provide examples of potential strategic and/or tactical approaches that will improve efficiency and reduce costs.
- Specific Knowledge – Provide information addressing the bullets in section 2 above.
- Issues and Concerns – Provide information regarding any potential issues or concerns that should be considered. Responses may include strength and weakness comparisons of known potential solutions from the vendor's point of view.
- Additional Information – Provide any additional information and/or any other parameters that should be considered or required in order for bidders to respond to a potential formal Request for Proposals (RFP).

Please respond to the information above and provide the name of your company, its location, a contact person, phone number and email address when replying to this RFI. A response does not bind or obligate the vendor to any agreement of provision or procurement of services referenced.

Since this RFI is designed as a tool to collect information and shall not result in a procurement contract, it does not fall under the requirements of State Finance Law §§139-j and 139-k (the Procurement Lobbying Law) and there is no restricted period. However, we ask that you direct your questions and responses in writing to the OGS point of contact listed below.

Please respond by **June 9, 2021 at 2:00pm** to (emailed responses will be accepted):

Nathan Baum

Contract Management Specialist 1

Office of General Services | Financial Administration | Agency Procurement Office

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