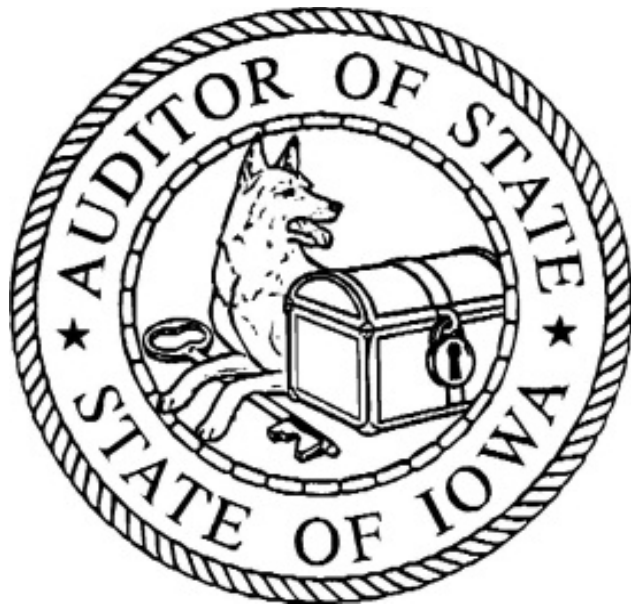


STATE OF IOWA
OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR OF STATE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR FAIR BOOTH

UPDATED MARCH 1, 2024



1. PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

1.1 PURPOSE

The State Auditor (“Auditor”) is the taxpayers’ watchdog, issuing reports on financial audits, misspent money, and investigating whistleblower claims of misspent money. The Auditor’s work is essential to compliance with federal funds received by the State of Iowa and local governmental subdivisions. In that capacity, the Auditor is soliciting proposals from qualified Contractors interested in providing bids for a 20’ x 10’ trade show booth (“booth”). We are asking interested parties to submit bids that show options at multiple price points.

The Auditor is seeking a Contractor (“Contractor”) to provide services detailed in this Request for Proposal (“RFP”). *The Auditor reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to solicit additional proposals if that is determined to be in the best interest of the taxpayers.*

1.2 BACKGROUND

One of the main initiatives to spread the word about the Auditor’s work and to reach Iowans about the role they play in helping to identify and report misspent taxpayer funds is staffing a booth for the 11 days of the Iowa State Fair. During this time, the Auditor has staff on hand to answer questions and educate fairgoers about the reports issued on their behalf by the Auditor.

Additional information about the work of the Auditor’s Office is available on the Auditor’s website www.auditor.iowa.gov.

2. BOOTH REQUIREMENTS

A Contractor shall provide all goods or services and deliverables as required, described and detailed in the appropriate section(s) below and shall meet all service and delivery timelines as specified by this RFP.

This booth is an essential way we share information about the work of the Auditor. Bringing people into the Auditor's booth and actively engaging with the public is critical to educating the public about the Auditor's work. We are asking interested participants to submit bids that demonstrate options at multiple price points.

The Contract shall provide bids that support, but are not limited to, the following:

2.1 BOOTH REQUIREMENTS

- a) 20' x 10' x 12' Booth: There is an exterior wall at the back of the space. The booth design will need to accommodate this space.
- b) Any part of the exhibit showing to the public must be finished on all sides.
- c) All materials must be flameproof.
- d) The booth shall not be more than 12 feet high, including signage.
- e) The booth must be freestanding.
- f) Power: Dropped power is the only source of power (no in-floor power). The booth should not sit on power cords.
- g) Booth storage when booth is not in use: When the booth is not in use, it will be stored at our office. The container the booth is stored in needs to be on wheels and be able to enter a standard door opening.
- h) Graphics: Interchangeable graphics so the booth can evolve over the years.
- i) Timeline: Must be in our possession by July 19, 2024. If you cannot meet this deadline, provide a timeline that you can meet. The Iowa State Fair runs from August 8-18, 2024.

2.2 OPTIONAL BOOTH FEATURES

- a) Counterspace: Counterspace doesn't have to be continuous. We can look at having different stations.
- b) Booth Set Up: A cost saving benefit could be that our team can set up the booth.
- c) Flooring: We would consider bids with a floor, but must provide similar option and pricing without a floor. Please keep in mind our storage requirements.

3. RFP QUESTIONS

The Auditor is interested in providing flexibility to Contractors in their responses. After reviewing this RFP, please provide additional comments or relevant information pertaining to the booth.

3.1 QUESTIONS

Please include the questions as well as your answer in your response.

- 1) Provide a brief overview of your organization.
- 2) Provide your organization's primary location(s) as well as the location(s) of any facility or office located outside of the primary location(s) that will be used to provide the booth.
- 3) Provide the following information on at least 3 clients (including contact persons) for whom similar products as described in this RFP are provided:
 - a. Company
 - b. Address
 - c. Contact
 - d. Telephone Number
 - e. Length of Relationship in Years
 - f. Services Provided

3.2 FINANCIAL PROPOSAL

The evaluation process is designed to award this procurement not necessarily to the Contractor of least cost, but rather to the Contractor whose booth best meets the needs of the Auditor. However, Contractors are encouraged to submit proposals that are consistent with state government efforts to conserve the state's resources.

The "Financial Proposal" should detail all itemized costs. All costs associated with providing the booth must be included in the stated price proposal. As indicated in this RFP, the Auditor is seeking options. All options should include itemized costs. Either an a la carte approach or an all-in approach are acceptable.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

4.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from Contractors to provide bids for the Auditor’s State Fair Booth.

4.2 PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

Issue RFP	March 18, 2024
Requests for Clarification and questions due	April 5, 2024; 3:00 p.m. CST
Response to questions, issues, and any RFP modifications	April 12, 2024
Proposals due to the Auditor’s Office	May 3, 2024; 3:00 p.m. CSt
Notice of award(s), if any	On or about May 10, 2024

The Auditor reserves the right to adjust the schedule of events as needed.

4.3 REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION

Contractors may submit written questions regarding the procurement process and interpretation of the RFP. Contractors must submit their questions by the deadline posted above with the subject line “RFP Question” to the following RFP Coordinator:

C.J. Petersen, Executive Officer
RFP Coordinator
Email: cj.petersen@aos.iowa.gov

If a Contractor wants to be notified when the questions and answers are posted on the website, they must email the RFP Coordinator with such request.

Oral questions will not be permitted. If the questions or requests for clarification pertain to a specific section of the RFP, the page and section number(s) must be referenced. From the issue date of the RFP until the deadline for submitting proposals, Contractors may contact only the RFP Coordinator with regard to the RFP. The RFP Coordinator will only respond to questions regarding the procurement process and interpretation of the RFP. Contractors may be disqualified if they contact any employee of the Auditor’s Office, other than the RFP Coordinator.

The Auditor assumes no responsibility for verbal representations concerning conditions made by its officers or employees at any time unless such representations are specifically incorporated into this RFP or written addenda to the RFP. Verbal discussions pertaining to modifications or clarifications of this RFP shall not be considered parts of the RFP unless confirmed in writing by the RFP Coordinator. Any information provided by the Contractor verbally shall not be considered part of the Contractor's proposal. Only written communications from the Contractor and received by the RFP Coordinator will be accepted.

This section shall not be construed as restricting communications related to the administration of any contract currently in effect between a Contractor and the State.

4.4 IOWA STATUTES AND ADMINISTRATIVE RULES

The terms and conditions of this RFP, any resulting contract, and any activities based upon this RFP shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of Iowa.

4.5 AMENDMENT TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

In the event that it becomes necessary to amend, add to, or delete any part of the RFP, such amendment will be posted to the website. The Contractor's response must include acknowledgment of all addenda. If a Contractor wants to be notified when any amendments are posted on the website, they must email the RFP Coordinator with such request.

4.6 SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

No more than one proposal per Contractor should be submitted. The Contractor should designate one person as the principal contact with respect to this RFP. No proposals will be accepted after the date and time specified in this section.

Responses should be emailed to:

C.J. Petersen, Executive Officer
RFP Coordinator
Email: cj.petersen@aos.iowa.gov

Responses must be received in the Auditor's office no later than 3:00 p.m. on the date indicated in section 4.2.

Prior to the deadline, contact concerning this RFP should be limited to the format described above. After the deadline, however, please be advised there is to be no contact with any staff member of the Auditor's office with respect to this proposal until a decision has been announced.

4.7 COST OF PROPOSAL

The costs of the preparation and delivery of the proposal are solely the responsibility of the Contractor.

4.8 WAIVER OF DEFICIENCIES

The Auditor reserves the right to waive minor deficiencies in a proposal. The decision as to whether a deficiency will be waived or will require the rejection of a proposal will be solely within the discretion of the Auditor. Each Contractor is specifically notified that the failure to comply with or respond to any part of this RFP requiring a response may result in rejection of its proposal.

4.9 CLARIFICATION OF PROPOSALS

The Auditor reserves the right to contact a Contractor after the submission of proposals for the purpose of clarifying a proposal. This contact may include written questions, interviews, site visits, a review of past performance if the Contractor has provided services to the State or any other political subdivision wherever located, or requests for corrective pages in the Contractor's proposal. The Auditor will not consider information received from or through Contractor if the information materially alters the content of the proposal or the type of services the Contractor is offering to the Auditor. An individual authorized to legally bid the Contractor shall sign responses to any request for clarification. Responses shall be submitted to the Auditor within the time specified in the Auditor's request. Failure to comply with requests for additional information may result in rejection of the proposal.

4.10 REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

The Auditor reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, received in response to this RFP at any time during the solicitation process. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the Auditor to award a contract. This RFP process is intended to provide the Auditor with competitive information to assist in the determination if and how a Contractor could benefit the education of Iowa State Fair attendees.

4.11 PROPOSAL DISCLOSURE PROHIBITION

Until a contract resulting from this RFP is executed, no employee, agent, or representative of any Contractor shall make available or discuss its proposal with the press, any elected or appointed official or officer of the State of Iowa, or any staff member of the Auditor's office, unless specifically authorized to do so by the Auditor or Chief of Staff.

4.12 NEWS RELEASE PROHIBITION

Contractors shall not issue any news releases or make any statement to the news media pertaining to this RFP or any proposal or contract

or work resulting from this RFP without the prior written approval of the Auditor.

4.13 COPYRIGHTS

By submitting a proposal, the Contractor agrees that the Auditor may copy the proposal for purposes of facilitating the evaluation or to respond to requests for public records. The Contractor consents to such copying by submitting a proposal and warrants that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party. The Auditor will have the right to use the ideas or adaptations of ideas that are presented in the proposals.

4.14 PROPOSALS PROPERTY OF AUDITOR

All proposals, whether accepted or rejected, become the property of the Auditor, and shall not be returned to the Contractor. Once the Auditor executes a contract, the contents of all Proposals will be public records available for inspection by interested parties, except for information for which Contractor properly requests confidential treatment according to exceptions provided in Iowa Code Chapter 22 or other applicable law.

4.15 PUBLIC RECORDS AND REQUESTS FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

The release of information by the Auditor to the public is subject to Iowa Code chapter 22. Contractors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these provisions prior to submitting a proposal. All information submitted by a Contractor may be treated as public information by the Auditor unless the Contractor properly requests that information be treated as confidential at the time of submitting the proposal.

Any requests for confidential treatment of information must be included in a cover letter with your proposal and must enumerate the specific grounds in Iowa Code chapter 22 which support treatment of the material as confidential and must indicate why disclosure is not in the best interests of the public. The request must also include the name, address, and telephone number of the person authorized by the Contractor to respond to any inquiries by the Auditor concerning the confidential status of the materials.

Any documents submitted that contain confidential information must be marked on the outside as containing confidential information, and each page upon which confidential information appears must be marked as containing confidential information. The confidential

information must be clearly identifiable to the reader wherever it appears. All copies of the proposal submitted, as well as the original proposal, must be marked in this matter.

In addition to marking the material as confidential material where it appears, the Contractor must submit one copy of the proposal in which the confidential information has been excised. The confidential material must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed and to retain as much of the document as possible. This copy must be submitted with the cover letter and will be made available for public inspection.

The Contractor's failure to request confidential treatment of material pursuant to this section and the relevant laws and administrative rules will be deemed by the Auditor as a waiver of any right to confidentiality which the Contractor may have had.

4.16 RESTRICTIONS ON GIFTS AND ACTIVITIES

Iowa Code chapter 68B contains laws which restrict gifts which may be given to or received by State employees and requires certain individuals to disclose information concerning their activities with state government. Contractors are responsible for determining the applicability of this chapter to their activities and for complying with these requirements. In addition, Iowa Code chapter 722.1 provides that it is a felony to bribe a public official.

4.17 AGREEMENT NOT EXCLUSIVE

Any agreement resulting from this RFP shall not be an exclusive agreement between the parties, and the State or Auditor and is entitled to enter into similar agreements with any other party.

4.18 CONSTRUCTION OF RFP WITH LAWS AND RULES

The RFP is to be construed in light of pertinent legal requirements. Changes in applicable laws and rules may affect the award process or the resulting contract. Contractors are responsible for ascertaining pertinent legal requirements and restrictions.

4.19 FEES

Fees quoted by the Contractor must be valid for a period of 180 days from the due date of responses to this RFP.

4.20 ORAL AGREEMENTS

Any and all oral agreements are not binding on the State of Iowa or the Auditor. Written agreements represent the contractual obligations of the State and the Auditor.

4.21 CONTRACTOR PRESENTATION OF SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

A Contractor, if requested, must be prepared to present evidence of experience, ability, service facilities and financial standing necessary to satisfactorily meet the requirements set forth or implied in the proposal.

4.22 CHANGES TO PROPOSAL

No additions or changes to the original proposal will be allowed after submittal. While changes are not permitted, clarifications at the request of the Auditor may be necessary.

4.23 COLLUSION

By responding, the Contractor implicitly states that the proposal is not made in connection with any competing Contractor submitting a separate response to the RFP and is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud.

5. FORMAT AND CONTENT OF PROPOSALS & EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

5.1 INSTRUCTIONS

The proposal shall include all of the documents and information and meet all of the requirements described in Section 5.2. Failure to adhere to these requirements will cause rejection of the Contractor's proposal. Contractors are cautioned that the forms provided as attachments herein are to be used directly.

Proposals should follow the order of questions as they are asked in Section 3 of this RFP. In response to each question asked in Section 3, restate the **main** question (denoted by a number or a letter) in bold font followed by your answers stated in regular font. Responses should be thorough and answer the specific question asked (including any issues addressed following a question). The proposal shall be formatted to 8.5" x 11" paper and be sequentially numbered, beginning with the cover page and include any appendices, addendums, and other attachments. Margins shall be no less than 1" on all sides. An electronic copy shall be emailed to cj.petersen@aos.iowa.gov.

If the Contractor designates any information in its proposal as confidential pursuant to Section 4.17 of this RFP, the Contractor must comply with all requirements set forth in Section 4.17. The confidential material must be excised in such a way as to allow the public to determine the general nature of the material removed and to retain as much of the proposal as possible.

Proposals shall not contain promotional or display materials.

Attachments shall be referenced in the proposal.

If a Contractor proposes more than one method of meeting these requirements, each shall be labeled and submitted separately. Each will be evaluated separately.

5.2 PROPOSAL

The following documents and responses shall be included in the proposal in the order given below:

Cover Page: The Contractor will provide a Cover Page that includes the Contractor's name and contact information, including full address, phone number and email.

Transmittal Letter: The letter shall include the following:

- 1) Name, title, mailing address, email, and telephone number of the contact person who may be contacted by the Auditor regarding the contents of the Contractor's proposal;
- 2) Acknowledgment that the Contractor is able and willing to deliver services as described in Section 2 "Scope of Services" or an explanation of how its service would differ from these expectations;
- 3) Any request for confidential treatment of information, in addition to the specific statutory basis support the request and an explanation of why disclosure of the information is not in the best interest of the public. (See Section 4.17 of this RFP for more information about confidentiality.)
- 4) The Contractor shall guarantee in writing the availability of the services offered and that all proposal terms, including price, will remain Contractor for a minimum of 180 days following the deadline for submitting proposals.
- 5) The transmittal letter shall include acceptance of terms and conditions. The Contractor shall specifically state that Contractor agrees with and accepts all terms and conditions stated in the RFP, including the terms and conditions stated in the RFP, without change except as otherwise expressly stated in its proposal. If the Contractor objects to any term or condition, the Contractor must specifically refer to the RFP page and section. Objections or responses that materially alter the RFP may, in the Auditor's sole determination, be deemed non-responsive and the Auditor may disqualify the Contractor. See Section 4.1 for additional information and requirements regarding contract terms and conditions.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS: The Contractor shall address each question in Section 3 of the RFP. Emphasis should be on clarity, brevity and completeness of information.