

Southern Maryland Regional Library Association
Request for Proposal for Providing Library Delivery and Sorting Services
2023

Responses to Bidder Inquiries

No.	Question	Response
1	The FY budget for 2022 was \$220,000 for this workflow. Is that the same budget for this project and or what is the current budget for this project?	Currently, the budget also reflects costs for mailing materials also which would be about 10-12% of the current delivery budget. We are hoping for the next fiscal year (which begins July 1, 2023) that cost will be much reduced. The FY2024 budget for delivery is \$242,528 which would be, minus some limited shipping expenses, the budget for the delivery vendor and/or our budget for running the delivery service.
2	In the RFP it mentions one vehicle (box truck) is being used with two people doing the work. Is that being contracted out to a 3PL provider or are you doing it yourself? If you are contracting out to a provider who is currently doing this work?	Currently, the two delivery team members are outsourced workers that are managed by SMRLA staff. The delivery assistant is contracted out from Manpower as a temporary worker and the delivery driver is provided for by TransForce. Both Manpower and TransForce can and do provide substitute helpers and drivers but only if the vacancy is known well in advance. The truck is leased from Ryder who also provides service to the vehicle and a substitute truck when needed.
3	What is the reasoning behind releasing this RFP? Service or just contract expiring?	We are interested in finding an organization that will handle the day-to-day management of the service (with oversight from SMRLA management). Currently the service is managed by SMRLA staff. The Ryder truck lease is expiring at the end of June 2024. The agreements with Manpower and TransForce are not contractual.
4	Is there currently anything going on with the current process that you are unhappy with that we should be made aware of so we don't repeat those issues?	Currently, the entire delivery service is dependent on two individuals and a leased truck. There is little to no redundancy in the team or the truck so that any call-out by team members or any truck maintenance issues lead to the service being canceled and/or highly curtailed. This results in customer dissatisfaction with the service. Service has had to be canceled or truncated 38 times in FY2022, and 27 times this year so far. Only a few of those cancelations or limited-service days were due to weather or completely unavoidable

		situations—most were due to personnel or mechanical issues (no backup helper/driver and no backup truck). We are hoping that outsourcing the delivery service will help eliminate this lack of redundancy.
5	The RPF looks to be for a service that comprises of basically a one truck route with some sorting involved. To clarify, so that we're not missing something: Is this the entire service or is it just a smaller piece of a bigger puzzle?	Currently, the entire service involves one truck and one route although the number of trucks and routes can be configured in the future in a different way based on workflow analysis, the SMRLA budget, and SMRLA's customer input. The number of stops and materials being moved around by this service will likely remain fairly static for the foreseeable future.
6	Will there be an email sent out for the virtual pre-bid conference on Monday?	No. The information on the Pre-bid Conference is available on the SMRLA RFP website. Here is a link directly to the Pre-Bid Conference information: https://smrla.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/RFP-Delivery-and-Sorting-Services-Pre-Bid-Conference.pdf
7	Is the site visit still on schedule for April 28 th ?	Yes. Information on the RFP Delivery and Sorting Services Pre-Bid Visit to SMRLA and one branch library is available on the SMRLA RFP website at https://smrla.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/RFP-Delivery-and-Sorting-Services-site-visit.pdf
8	Can you give us a brief background of what your present operation is and how you foresee the changes from this RFP. Is it going to go from state employees to a vendor? Please give us some idea so can we get a full scope of what it is?	The SMRLA delivery team consists of 1 driver, 1 helper, and 1 truck that we lease. The driver and helper are not state employees, they are employed by agencies and work for SMRLA under a contract with the agencies. We would like to have an outside vendor take over the day-to-day management of the entire delivery system.
9	The proposed budget is around \$220,000-230,00 per year, is that correct?	Yes. The next fiscal year which starts July 1, 2023 just had the budget approved for \$242,528.00. Any change in this budget would need SMRLA Board of Trustees approval. If all contractor bids come in higher than then the yearly budget, SMRLA will assess the situation to determine the best next steps.
10	The walk-thru [Pre-Bid Visit}, did we ever get a location on the walk-thru?	Yes. The link is on the website. The walk-thru is this Friday 4/28, 2-3:30pm. Please RSVP to the RFP email address if coming. The tour is not a

		<p>requirement for consideration of a RFP proposal. The website description is as follows:</p> <p>The Pre-Bid Visit to SMRLA and one branch library, as noted in the Schedule of Events, is scheduled for April 28th from 2:00-3:30 p.m., EST. We are unable to schedule individual tours for every vendor so it is possible that more than one organization will be in attendance. The visit will include the SMRLA delivery facility, the delivery truck, and a branch library. Attendance at the site tour is not a mandatory requirement for submitting a completed Delivery and Sorting Services RFP to SMRLA. Please RSVP to: rfp@smrla.org with the subject line of Pre-Bid Visit to SMRLA Please arrive at 2:00 p.m. EST. Enter at the front entrance and ring the doorbell to SMRLA for admittance to the SMRLA offices. SMRLA Address: 37600 New Market Rd, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622 Phone for queries about directions to site only: 301-884-0436 The questions and responses during the tour will be noted and posted up on the SMRLA RFP website. The questions and responses during the tour will be noted and posted up on the SMRLA RFP website. The direct link to the Delivery and Sorting Services RFP Bidder Inquiries is: https://smrla.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Bidder-Inquiry-Response_Delivery-andSorting.pdf</p>
111	<p>Can you walk us thru any expectations on technology in regards to the tote delivery, proof of delivery, or anything like that? Can you walk us thru any requirements on the delivery and what you're looking at in regards to POD?</p>	<p>There are no expectations of having either totes or individual items scanned by the delivery team at this time., Currently, the expectation is for the delivery team to simply deliver and pick up totes. There are no expectations of any technology used for tracking. Tracking is done by the libraries thru POLARIS, the Integrated Library System (software) for the region.</p>
12	<p>If we show up to Charlotte Hall and we are supposed to get 6 totes, how do we know we got 6 totes? Because if you say only 5 got delivered and we only got 5, we didn't get the 6 as claimed, I want to talk about tote accountability.</p>	<p>The accountability of totes being shipped is on the libraries. All totes are placed in a certain area for shipping where the delivery team does the pickup. There is no tallying of totes at this time. The libraries' online system will show if items are never delivered. Currently, we have a closed system. The only materials on the truck are library materials.</p>
13	<p>Can you walk us thru what you are looking for in a partner vendor?</p>	<p>We would like an organization that understands customer service and has a high level of professionalism with our customers. Be able to provide back up services either with driver,</p>

		helper, or the truck. Page 15 of the RFP describes the criteria used to evaluate each proposal.
14	The team currently, are they open to being hired by the vendor?	I believe so, but I don't want to speak for them. They know we are doing the study with a possibility of outsourcing. Both team members have said they would like to work for SMRLA directly.
15	Currently how big is the team?	The team consists of 1 driver and 1 helper. The route consists of 190 miles per day with 14-15 stops. They deliver and pick up about 150 totes daily.
16	When it comes to the driver and helper, they go to the location they pick up and deliver, is there a 3 rd party who separates the material, is that where you want us to come in and fine tune that piece?	The 3 rd party is the libraries themselves. Each location has totes labeled for the specific branches. They take care of the sorting.
17	If there nothing going to that library, do they still make the stop?	Yes. They go to each branch every day. It is very rare not to have anything being delivered to a specific branch. They also make 3 stops once a week to academic libraries and the Calvert County Education Department. Even if nothing is being delivered, there may be something to pick up and the academic library stops are mandatory on a weekly basis
18	Delivery schedule is Monday-Friday?	Yes. The schedule is Monday-Friday.
19	Who do you follow in terms of inclement weather?	Its currently decided locally. Susan Grant and the driver will text and usually decide by 8:00 pm if delivery will be canceled the next day. A 3 rd party would need to follow local government closures, possibly Charles County government. It will be local, not federal.
20	What do you foresee in regards to communication? Do we call you?	Communication should go through Susan Grant as the manager of the service, and then either the CEO or Susan Grant's backup person. Susan Grant would prefer a text to her cell phone. Any communications to the libraries should come from SMRLA.
21	The delivery team-how are they, are they reliable?	We have a great team. They are honest and hard working. They are well liked by the library staff. If they need off, they always let Susan Grant know. Since they are not direct employees, Susan Grant sometimes needs to negotiate with them.
22	Does the RFP need to be a shipped proposal, no option of just electronic submission, email or upload submission?	It does need to be a physical copy. There is an electronic copy required with the physical, either a thumb drive or CD.
23	Can the driver/helper be an Independent Contractor to awarded company? Or does driver/helper have to be employee of awarded company?	That is entirely up to the awarded contractor as to what works best for that company. We are concerned with continuation of service so whichever model works best to ensure consistent,

		reliable, trustworthy team members will be acceptable to SMRLA.
24	Can the driver be CDL A or B driver?	CDL A is acceptable.
25	What is the gross weight of the vehicle (GVW)?	The truck is a 26' box truck with a standard GVW of 25,999 lbs.
26	Do you expect background checks on the driver and helper?	Currently that is not a requirement although we do expect professional behavior from the delivery team. It is a possibility that in the future we would have that expectation.
27	Currently, your start time for delivery is 5:00 a.m. but you mentioned that, in the past, the delivery start time was 4:00 a.m. Is there a problem with the start time being changed or adjusted?	Any change in the delivery start time would need to be negotiated with SMRLA and delivery team. This is especially true if a new start time begins later in the day as that affects both staffing and workflow at the delivery sites.
28	The current truck has a GPS for the location as well as driver behavior oversight. What is SMRLA's expectation concerning the use of the GPS, that is, who is expected to monitor the data gathered?	The day-to-day managers of the service are responsible for the truck and delivery team which includes monitoring the GPS data. SMRLA management also expects to have access to that data.
29	"The truck is parked overnight, and the route begins and ends at SMRLA headquarters in Charlotte Hall, MD": The understanding is that the contractor will also be able to park their truck overnight at Charlotte Hall, is that correct?	Yes, unless it is larger than the current 26' truck. If more than one truck is involved or the truck is larger than the current truck, notification and negotiation is needed.
30	Who provides all the transport packaging (including totes, containers, pouches, bags etc.)?	SMRLA would purchase and maintain the transport packaging.
31	"Other cargo." Libraries occasionally ship other cargo. Often this is a "Kit" which is described in the RFP. Other than kits, what would 'other cargo' be?	Other cargo varies but typically it would be cardboard boxes of pamphlets or other promotional materials, bags/totes with equipment such as cameras or telescopes, mailing tubes containing posters, and so forth. It is anticipated that all materials would be contained in some way whether that would be in a box, tote, tube, or bag. To be clear, a vast percentage of the delivery would be of traditional library materials such as books, DVD, CDs which would be contained in the totes as described in the RFP.
32	Which locations receive reduced service during the summertime?	None. Summer is actually a very busy time for public libraries.

33	For each of these locations, what is the variance between 'regular' service and summertime service?	N/A [See above answer]
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