

Questions and Answers

Reverse Auction Buyer Training

1. Will you make the slides available for download?

Yes, we will post within this Reverse Auctions Interact page.

2. What if you accidentally select the wrong vendor for award?

The system asks the buyer if they want to make an award after they select the vendor. If they proceed and award to the wrong vendor, the buyer should follow the FAR and local procedures for rescinding an award.

3. How can this be used as market research?

Reverse Auction is a tool to obtain pricing for making awards. Market research should be conducted prior to building your auction in order to determine starting and target bid amounts.

4. Is this procurement tool mandatory?

No, GSA's reverse auction tool is not mandatory, however some agencies have policies in place to use reverse auction in general for certain types of acquisitions. We recommend you check your agency's policies for the latest guidance.

5. Do the vendors see the IGE and target price?

Currently, the vendors see the starting price, which is set by the buyer (instructions state that the starting price should correlate to the IGE). The development team is looking at possibly modifying this approach by allowing the vendor's initial bid to be the starting bid rather than the buyer's starting bid (ige), and adding an IGE field that would not be viewed by vendors but be included in auction reports.

6. Can you print out a copy of the award document?

Auction details can be printed from the My Auctions page in the tool.

7. Do I need to follow-up the auction win with a paper/electronic 1449 or 1155 form?

Yes, the official award is made in the agency procurement system. The Reverse Auction Platform provides award and unsuccessful bid notification. Once the buyer has made the award in their procurement system, they must go back into the Reverse Auction Platform and press the award button to trigger the award and unsuccessful bid notification.

8. Do the vendors have to pay a fee to participate?

No.

9. Where is the J/A for brand name?

J/A's are added as an attachment using the Attachment tab at the bottom of the auction page. Note: The J and A must still be posted in e-buy at this time in accordance with FAR.

10. Is there a minimum dollar decrement?

The decrement should be 2% or less of the starting price of the auction.

11. How detailed does the buyer's determination of contractor responsibility have to be?

Buyers still must follow all FAR and Agency specific requirements for documentation of contractor responsibility and the level of detail will be determined by those requirements.

12. When you selected your vendors you wished to contact, and went back into it, it was defaulted back to all.

If you leave the screen without saving, it will go back to the default setting.

13. How/when is the FPDS-NG reporting done?

FPDS-NG entries are done as a separate action as the buyer would normally do under any procurement action.

14. How long should you leave the auction out there?

The amount of time (start and end times) an auction is open is determined by the buyer. Ensure you follow FAR Parts 5, 8 and any Agency specific requirements.

15. When is the next training on this topic?

Check www.gsa.gov/events for future sessions.

16. Does the system have customer support?

For general ReverseAuctions.gsa.gov support questions, please send an email to: reverseauctionshelp@gsa.gov or call 855-372-1094. The Reverse Auctions helpdesk hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, Central Time Zone.

17. Has the reverse auction thing been done before? It seems like it would drive our SDVOSB pool out of business.

Reverse Auctioning has been around for at least 10 years. We recommend doing an internet search on Reverse Auction.

18. How do you get information to determine the item offered is technically acceptable?

The vendor inputs the Manufacture and Part Number of the quoted product. You may also request the vendors send attachments to support their quote.

19. Does the system notify the buyer if a vendor has asked a question?

Yes. A message will be sent to the buyer's e-mail box.

20. When you award using the award screen in the system, is an order generated and sent or do you have to follow up with a SF order form outside of the system?

The official award is made in the agency procurement system. The Reverse Auction Platform provides award and unsuccessful bid notification. Once the buyer has made the award in their procurement system, they must go back into the Reverse Auction Platform and press the award button to trigger the award and unsuccessful bid notification.

21. Are all of the Schedules and BPA's listed on the GSA slipsheet available for my customers?

Yes.

22. Why are we required to put in a target price? Won't that limit the bids?

No, competition ultimately dictates the number of bids. The target price is only an internal figure determined by the buyer and is used for reporting purposes only.

23. How does a vendor talk with a KO?

Vendors can talk to the contracting officers by submitting questions through the reverse auction platform.

24. How do protests work?

Reverse Auctions is a pricing tool. It does not take the place of the contracting officer's responsibilities to follow the FAR (33) and agency specific policies and procedures for handling protests. If documentation is needed from the Reverse Auction Platform, e-mail the helpdesk to retrieve documents and time information.

25. Is tool only open to vendors who already have a GSA schedule?

Yes.

26. Can we use Reverse Auction under the DoD ESI ESA?

We are not familiar with the DoD ESI ESA. Please check with your agency procurement officials. At this time only GSA Multiple Award Schedules and BPAs awarded against Schedules are loaded on the reverse auction platform.

27. Does the Auction program just record our awardee selection, and allow us as buyers to continue to process the actual award through our own contracting award system? Or is there some sort of notification through the Auction program to the awardee?

The official award is made in the agency procurement system. The Reverse Auction Platform provides award and unsuccessful bid notification. Once the buyer has made the award in their procurement system, they must go back into the Reverse Auction Platform and press the award button to trigger the award and unsuccessful bid notification.

28. Will this interact with our Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system or will we have to update our system manually?

The reverse auction system does not interact with ERP.

29. Will we still be able to buy in GSA Advantage as we always have?

Yes, you can still buy in GSA Advantage, however the Reverse Auction system may provide you with lower pricing.

30. You said it should reduce FOIA's because contractors can see information. Do they see unit prices and the awardee?

Vendors see the pricing throughout the auction process. Once the award is made in your procurement system, log back into reverse auction to finalize the award to prompt the system to send award and unsuccessful notifications.

31. How do you select more than one MAS Schedule?

Currently the system only allows single MAS Schedule to be selected. Buyers can select different SINS under the respective MAS Schedule on a per line item basis.

32. For multiple line items, is there a way that information that pertains to all line items be defaulted so there is not repetition?

Buyers can input information related to the overall auction on the create auction page description text box.

33. Does a 1449 still need to be typed and submitted before it is a valid contract?

The official award is made in the agency procurement system. The Reverse Auction Platform provides award and unsuccessful bid notification. Once the buyer has made the award in their procurement system, they must go back into the Reverse Auction Platform and press the award button to trigger the award and unsuccessful bid notification.

34. Didn't your example (buy laptops) ignore the non-manufacturer rule which would apply to a set-aside?

The example was for training - buyers are reminded to check and abide by all FAR and local rules.

35. Are sellers able to see target price along with other vendors quote/price amounts.

No, sellers are only able to see other vendors' quote/prices in the current system. The target price is an internal figure for the Buyers reference.

36. Do you have to make an award from this auction? Can you do a "No award".

Buyers can select "No Award" in the Reverse Auction Platform.

37. What about COC referrals?

COC referrals are handled just as you would under a normal procurement action.

38. Does the system notify the buyer when bids are made?

No, except by means of updating your auction information under the My Auctions tab.

39. When receiving questions via email, there isn't anything indicating which line item or auction is in question making it difficult to answer the questions, is there a way of notifying the vendors to include this information?

Thank you for this question, we will include this in our future training slides for Vendors.

40. Can vendors not on the schedule participate in the auction process?

The platform sends notifications to the vendors under the selected schedule and SIN. Vendors must have a GSA schedule to participate in the auction.

41. What is the process to request management rights to generate management reports for our command?

Management would contact the Reverse Auction program to receive administrative rights to run level III reports for its buyers.

42. Is there a place in the reverse auction to notify all vendors solicited of other requirements like providing Terms and Conditions and other documents that we are required to have them provide with bids?

Buyers can add terms and conditions under the attachment field or add general information in the description box.

43. How do I get the certificate with the CLP credit?

It will be emailed to all participants within two weeks.

44. I understand there is no additional fee burden to use this the reverse auction process, but can you specify the basic fee arrangement to use your schedules?

The industrial funding fee (IFF) remains unchanged at .75%.

45. If we are not required to award in GSA reverse auction, how do we close out the auction? Or do we award in SPS and then award in GSA reverse auction, I'm thinking that this might cause confusion.

The official award is made in the agency procurement system. The Reverse Auction Platform provides award and unsuccessful bid notification. Once the buyer has made the award in their procurement system, they must go back into the Reverse Auction Platform and press the award button to trigger the award and unsuccessful bid notification.

46. Can you award multiple line items at one time?

Yes, using the single award option, you can make an award for multiple line items in a market basket fashion.

47. Will there be a non-GSA version of this application in the future?

This platform is a GSA created and managed platform. There are currently commercial platforms available against our Schedule 70 contracts.

48. Why do you add a target price? Wouldn't that stop the bidding once it is reached?

No. You can get pricing even below your target price.

49. What is the greatest advantage of using GSA Reverse Auction as opposed to going directly to GSA Contracts?

One advantage is that vendors are able to see their competition and this will encourage sellers to successively bid prices down for an award.

50. How does this system comply with the requirements of Section 508?

The Reverse Auction platform sends notification to all eligible vendors under the selected Schedule and SIN chosen by the buyer.

51. What are the rules in case of computer or electronic failure during auction? Do you reschedule?

Please review the Terms and Conditions. This is addressed in the Terms and Conditions under Automatic Auction Extension.

52. Can we award to other than the LPTA bid, for example to Best Value?

Buyers can identify in their solicitation terms and conditions how they intend to make the award in their quote terms (instructions to offer).

53. Can you see how the reverse auction is progressing while it's open, or do you only see it when the auction is over?

Yes, the buyer can monitor the auction while it is in progress and witness quotes as they are submitted on the line items.

54. How effective is the tool the longer you use it for the same item?

Very effective.

55. Is there a plan to include services in the future?

Services that can be acquired effectively via a reverse auction procurement model may be added. Some limited (simple/ancillary) services are available now.

56. Are FSSI-Wireless and FSSI-Print Management vendors participants in this platform?

Not at this time. These offerings may be added during a future phase, TBD.

57. Does the system satisfy the advertising requirement? (eg: like E-buy, FedBizOps..)

Yes, the system satisfies the advertising requirement for schedule purchases under FAR Part 8.4.

58. Will additional Schedules be added? Such as VA schedule 621I?

Additional Schedules will be added in the future.

59. Do you press Award before or after you have completed your agency award documents?

You must complete your agency award documents first and then log into the reverse auction platform to process the award notification to the vendors.

60. Is this only for BPA and MAS or will it be open for all procurements?

Currently the platform only accommodates MAS and BPA's awarded against MAS contracts.

61. How can you cancel an auction?

Auctions can be canceled by going to the Auction Management header in the My Auction Tab and clicking on the cancel auction button. Buyers will then be prompted to select the auction they wish to cancel and will be required to provide sufficient justification for why the auction is being canceled.

62. I did not see schedule 71 Furniture listed under the MAS dropdown. Can Reverse Auction be used for purchases under 71 -Furniture?

Schedule 71 is available in the Reverse Auction tool.

63. We have been informed by multiple vendors that they are unaware of Reverse auction and are confused on how it works. Have the vendors been notified?

Yes, vendors have been notified, however not all vendors have had the opportunity to participate in training on the system. We are providing training opportunities like this one at least once a week dedicated to training vendors and buyers.

64. I have a vendor that is listed in eBuy but not reverse auction.

If you have a vendor that has a multiple award schedule contract in eBuy within one of the Schedules/SINs listed on the site, and they do not appear on the vendor selection list, please report the discrepancy to the help desk at reverseauctionshelp@gsa.gov.

65. What size of operation do you see getting the most use of this service? I am interested but am not sure how effective it would be for smaller operations like a ship.

There is no target/ideal/recommended size operation that will benefit more or less from using this platform. The platform is designed to benefit all size operations and use of the platform is entirely up to the buyer. Buyers will need to determine if reverse auction is an appropriate procurement method based on the nature of their requirements.

66. Is the system usable now, or still in test mode?

The Reverse Auction platform is available as of July 1. It is available now.

67. Where do you print a copy of your auction with the list of bids received?

A copy of the auction with a list of bids received can be printed from the Buyer Abstract Report in the Reports Tab on the navigation bar at the top of the User Dashboard. In addition, the buyer can go to **My Auctions -> View & Cancel Bids**, then select the Auction and Line Item from the drop down boxes and then click **View All Bids**.

68. Do all vendors that participate in EBuy participate in Reverse Auction?

Only those vendors that have MAS contracts in the Schedules and SINs currently implemented in the reverse auction platform (list available on the reverse auctions home page) will be able to participate at this time. Therefore, some eBuy vendors may not have their contracts loaded in reverse auction at this time, and so will not see any opportunities in their RA inbox.

69. Are awards only made line by line or can they be made enmasse?

Depending upon the buyer's selection of multiple award or single award when making the award selection the buyers can make a single award (awarding all line items to one vendor) or multiple award (awarding line items to different vendors).

70. Are awards conducted with reverse auction protestable?

Yes, awards conducted using the reverse auction system can be protested. Protests are handled in accordance with the same procedures of FAR 33.

71. Do you have to follow up award notice in the system with a hard copy order from outside of system?

Yes, the platform only notifies the vendor that they have been selected for award. Buyers have to follow-up with award documentation to the vendors.

72. Do vendors see the offers submitted by rivals?

Vendors are able to see the bids submitted by others. However, they are not able to see the other vendors' names.

73. Will there be a tool to print a draft of the entire draft copy for higher level approvals?

Reference questions 6, 67, and 76 for printing advice. We are looking at an enhancement to route actions for internal approval in the future.

74. Do the vendors see the IGE & target price?

The IGE is recommended as being the starting bid. The vendor will see that. The vendor will not see the target price until it is met.

76. Where do you print a copy of your auction with the list of bids received?

In the make award screen buyers are presented with an abstract of the bids. Currently buyers will have to convert the page to .pdf format and print or do print screen and paste to print the abstract.

77. How is best value (versus lowest price) addressed and documented during the award process?

Buyers still have to follow their agency and FAR requirements for documentation.

78. NAVSUP FLC San Diego Contracting: We use SPS to award our contracts - Is there an option to say "no award" in this system and then provide that info to the vendor?

The development team is looking at the possibility of adding a "no award" option to the finalize auction page as an enhancement.

79. Do you have to follow up award notice in the system with a hardcopy order form outside of system?

Yes, the award notice in the system simply notifies the vendor they have been selected by the buyer for award. Buyers still have to generate the order and provide the vendor with the signed order from their procurement system.

80. What determines the end of an auction - the end time or a gap between bids?

The end date and time set by the buyer determines the end of the auction.

81. Does the system notify the buyer when bids are made?

No, the system does not notify the buyer when bids are made. When a buyer logs into the system, in the My Auctions section of the dashboard, buyers will see all auctions currently active and the number of line items with bids.

82. Does this platform meet the requirements of Section 508?

Yes. All eligible vendors under the SIN will receive notification of an auction.

83. I have 4 vendors that are on NAVSUP's Furniture BPA that are listed in EBUY but not in Reverse Auction? How do we get them loaded?

Schedule 71 vendors are available. Currently the NAVSUP BPAs are not loaded. GSA is working with Navy to add their BPAs awarded against GSA Schedules in the platform in the future.

84. Do vendors see the customer information and delivery information?

Yes, vendors will know the ordering activity, the buyer and contact information as well as the delivery address and recipient.

85. How do you get information to determine the item offered is technically acceptable?

Buyers can request detailed spec sheets on items offered and vendors can attach spec sheets when posting their bids. For Brand Name solicitations, buyers are required to input a part number and manufacturer and vendors are required to put in the part number and manufacturer being offered.

86. Is there a "test" login that CSDs can use to demo this during training sessions with our customer base?

This is being created in coordination with GSA OCIO and CAR R4 POC: Kevin Stallings. Please check with Kevin Stallings, kevin.stallings@gsa.gov.

87. What is actually happening in the system when you hit the Award button?

The system will generate the successful and unsuccessful award notices. Note: Buyers must make the official paper award in their agency procurement system before clicking the award button in Reverse Auction.

88. Do we have to send unsuccessful letters to the unsuccessful offerors?

Once award notification is made within the Reverse Auction Platform, the platform will generate an email to the vendors. This does not take the place of any other policies and procedures you may need to follow for your particular agency. Note: Buyers must make the official paper award in their agency procurement system before clicking the award button in Reverse Auction.