

QPL QUESTIONS

<p>Section 1, page 1 there are 2 methods by which a vendor may be qualified.</p>	<p>If one is not on QPL already, is it possible in the amount of time till bid (about 3 weeks) to be evaluated and added to QPL in time to submit bid? Can manufacturers that do not make the QPL deadline, go through the process and be added to this contract after the bid date (March 27).</p>	<p>Due to several issues concerning the existing Qualified Products Lists (QPLs), and the specifications on which they are based, these QPLs and specifications have been suspended, pending further input and review, and interim specifications have been issued for the purpose of qualifying products bid under the QPL method of this bid only (the GSA method is unchanged). These interim specifications are attached to the amended IFB included with this Addendum. Vendors are urged and cautioned to review the amended bidding procedures carefully. Any product or product line bid that meets the relevant specifications and otherwise complies with the requirements of the RFP will be considered for award.</p>
	<p>Will you consider product lines that have been submitted for QPL review before the solicitation came out, but not yet reviewed by the bid opening (because of backlog in review), pending their later passing the prequalification?</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>
<p>1.0, paragraph 6 (page 1 of 47)</p>	<p>May a vendor listed within a QPL category offer all of their products (full line) applicable to that category or only the specific models noted on the QPL?</p> <p>FOLLOW UP QUESTION – If a vendor is awarded a contract and they have other products added to the QPLs of other categories they didn't initially bid, may those be included-in/added-to their contract at the same/appropriate discounting during the contract's term?</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>

Section 3.3, #4 [pg 8 of 47]	<p>How will the State compare 'net pricing' when vendors are bidding discounts-off-list which apply to entire lines?</p> <p>FOLLOW UP QUESTION – Will the State use the vendor's QPL products as the basis for this comparison?</p> <p>FOLLOW UP QUESTION – May a vendor recommend products to be used for this comparison?</p>	<p>Bids will be evaluated based primarily on pricing discounts from list and a comparison of resulting net prices within a bidding category, considering whether an award provides best value and is in the best interest of the State.</p> <p>See Section 3.3 BID EVALUATION PROCESS</p> <p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p> <p>No comparison product recommendations will be received.</p>
3.1.1 – Qualification by Listing in the Relevant QPL (Method #1)	If a manufacturer has only (3) specific model numbers from one product line on a QPL, can he bid on the entire category with other product lines and model numbers within that category, or is he limited to bid on those (3) model numbers only?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
4.16 – New Products and Product Removals	If a mfg is able to get added to additional QPL's, would there be any opportunity to get on contract before the contract expires in 3 years if we aren't able to submit a bid now?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Qualified Product List for Ergonomic Chairs Category III Page: 7-11	Can manufacturers make changes to the QPL or do they have to apply for changes through a modification?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
	Before issuance of this IFB, why was the QPL not opened up for new resources ? I received no notice so I could include additional items to the QPL	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.

	<p>It seems as if the QPL is an outdated and costly method of insuring quality product for a contract. Most state contracts that I currently work with require compliance with ANSI/BIFMA standards. Would you consider this in lieu of the QPL? This could potentially allow a vendors complete line of product to the contract, verses a few items that meet the QPL.</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>
	<p>We are a NC manufacturer and we are currently QPL certified on the NC 420.D Library Furniture contract. Does our QPL certification apply to only those items or does the QPL certification apply to our company and any items we have on our price list.</p> <p>If we are able to add a dealer to the contract initially and we have another dealer who would like to also sell our products after the start date of the contract, will we be able to add a dealer at any time? If so how would we work this out with the state?</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p> <p>Dealers may be added after the effective date of the contract through contacting the State's contract administrator.</p> <p>See Section 4.5 AUTHORIZED DEALERS.</p>
<p>Pricing Submittal form: Page 16 & 17</p>	<p>It is unclear as to how this form should be filled out especially when considering the multiple categories that may be involved. Some manufacturers may only offer one sub category while others may offer products for most of the products on the QPL's. Shouldn't the form ask for the specific QPL number and sub category that is being bid?</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p> <p>A separate Pricing Submittal Form should be submitted for each sub-category in which one or more different products/product lines (from those bid in another sub-category) are bid. The applicable sub-category(ies) shall be identified on the "Description" line.</p>
<p>3.1 Bid Qualification</p>	<p>If a vendor has products on the QPL, can the vendor offer the entire "balance of line" which would receive the same discount? Can these non QPL items be included in our proposal?</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>
	<p>We are an 'out of state' (Canada) manufacturer, we applied to be on the</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to</p>

	<p>QPL back in 2012 and are still waiting for a response. I applied again a few weeks ago, but understand it's a long process. Can I apply to be considered for the state contract if I don't hear whether or not we are on the QPL?</p>	<p>question #1.</p>
<p>Section 3.1.2 Qualification by listing in the Relevant Federal GSA Furniture Schedule (Method #2)</p>	<p>The state has included subsection 4 as follows:</p> <p>The Vendor (1) has paid unemployment taxes or income taxes in North Carolina and whose principal place of business (i.e., the headquarters from which the business of the Vendor is directed or managed) is located in this State, or (2) the product(s) bid by the Vendor are manufactured or produced in North Carolina. Unless demonstrably incorrect, information available of the North Carolina Secretary of State's business entity database will be used to determine Vendor's principal place of business.</p> <p>Question: Is this not unfair to a company who is a NAFTA agreement partner with the United States and actually is accepted under the Made In America Act? It is impossible for us to pay unemployment taxes or income taxes as we are a Canadian company. However, we do help to employ people in North Carolina</p>	<p>Chapter 10 (Government Procurement) of NAFTA does not apply to purchases of goods and services by state governments. The definition of a resident vendor and its application to this solicitation are required under State law. See G.S. 143-57.1(a1)(4).</p>
	<p>QPL: We have several chairs that have been approved on the QPL. We changed the name of the chairs to conform with the company's brand. We notified the state of the name change and it was. Should we bid these chairs under the old name (which is not in any of our price guides or brochures) or under the new name that was approved by the state? The reason that I ask is that, even though the changes were approved, the new name was never updated in any of the state documents that I know of.</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>

	<p>Why not allow more vendors on the contract? It has been our experience that allowing more vendors on the contract is better for the state agencies because they have more choices. Doesn't this makes sense as long as the state sets the bar for quality, base discount, warranty, and options?</p>	<p>The State's determination regarding the number of multiple awards in a particular category, pursuant to G.S. 143-57.1(a), is based on a number of factors, including price, compatibility, service, delivery, freight charges, contract terms, compatibility with interior architectural design and the number of vendors reasonably required to meet the State's needs in an economical manner.</p>
	<p>Before issuance of this IFB, why was the QPL not opened up for new resources ? I received no notice so I could include additional items to the QPL</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>
	<p>It seems as if the QPL is an outdated and costly method of insuring quality product for a contract. Most state contracts that I currently work with require compliance with ANSI/BIFMA standards. Would you consider this in lieu of the QPL? This could potentially allow a vendors complete line of product to the contract, verses a few items that meet the QPL.</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>
Section 3.1.2 page 7	<p>If we are already qualified under one QPL but have products that would also fall under other QPL'S we would like to bid, and these products are on GSA, why can't are only the companies based in North Carolina permitted to bid on these additional categories?</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>
Section 1.0, page 1	<p>Regarding how a vendor may become qualified to submit a bid on the furniture categories.</p> <p>If our company is not listed on the State's Qualified Products List (QPL) for a specific category of furniture, and is not a North Carolina resident, does this mean that our company may not submit a bid in that specific category of furniture?</p> <p>How does one get on the list of the States</p>	<p>Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.</p>

	QPL?	
4.19, Pg 13	If the same product is available under multiple categories, would you prefer that it is listed twice in the electronic copy of proposed catalog (once for each category)?	
Section 1.0	The IFB states that furniture must be on the QPL to bid the product under this method. Is the state allowing vendors time to have additional products reviewed and approved on the QPL?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Section 1.0	General Statute 143-57.1 states in (a1) 3 products offered must be done with the same pricing and specifications as the vendor's products on GSA. This is generally for the cost of the product alone and design and installation services are added as additional line items. Should this not be stated on the IFB, and subsequently the contract, to make sure the agency is prepared for these costs to be added, and that the vendor does not risk being in violation of their approved GSA schedule and pricing? Qualifying product to be bid by it being on a GSA schedule would help with the problems associated with the QPL process, but mandating these products be bid at the GSA pricing should be re-visited.	<p>The term "specifications" refers to the required attributes of the item bid and the term "price" refers to the price of the item as identified on the GSA schedule. Other requirements for listing on a GSA schedule or terms of a vendor's GSA contract do not apply. To the extent this IFB does not list other costs as allowable, those costs must be calculated into the amount bid.</p> <p>[See, as amended, Section 4.1 PRICING, Section 4.2 MINIMUM ORDERS and Section 4.7 DELIVERY, OUT-OF-STOCK AND BACK-ORDERS.]</p>
QPL Questions:	<p>After a request to add product to the QPL has been submitted, how quickly could it be approved and added to the QPL?</p> <p>If a request to add product has been submitted and some products were added to the QPL and others were not how do we find the status of the products that were not added?</p> <p>Can you resubmit a product that was not added upon the original request?</p>	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
3.1.1. Qualifications	How come there is not an easier process for getting products onto the QPL?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to

by listing: (method #1)		question #1.
3.1.1. Qualifications by listing: (method #1)	How come there is not a printed schedule listing dates as to when products will be evaluated.	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
3.1.1. Qualifications by listing: (method #1)	How come there is ONLY – QPL's for certain furniture items? (This seems very limited for the end-users selection process).	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
3.1.1. Qualifications by listing: (method #1)	How come NC does not adopt the Testing of Products by the ANSI/BIFMA test standards, rather than evaluating them at a state level?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
	Are vendors with products currently on the QPL able to utilize the GSA schedule to price same products even though products are not manufactured in North Carolina? If yes, are we allowed to include “all” products within the same family of single product line that is approved on QPL? Example, Improve HE chair is approved on QPL. We make several chairs or a “family” of seating within the Improve line. All Improve chairs are on GSA. Can we include in this bid response?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1. If a product bid is not manufactured in North Carolina, the bidder must be a North Carolina resident business in order to bid under the GSA method.
Page 8	“If vendor selected under QPL method is determined to be a non-resident, resident vendors will be offered opportunity to price-match.” This sentence needs to be removed from bid. Please confirm.	
Section 1.0 on page 1 of 47	If we have a new product that is not on GSA (method#2) and has not been approved via the QPL (method#1), is there any way to submit it to be added to the contract?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Section 3.1.1, Page 6	Can you please advise if a non-resident of North Carolina can utilize the GSA option for the solicitation due to the QPL length of time for approval?	No. Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Scope 1.0, last	Is there a possibility that Qualified Vendors for categories will be increased from a	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to

paragraph, page 1	"generally 3-6" to an increased number to allow more interested manufacturers?	question #1.
2.5, Bid Contents, section B, page 4	Can we submit our QPL models on an excel sheet with our list pricing or does it have to be copy of our current physical catalog? I believe we can according too section 4.19 on page 13, but want to be sure	
Attachment A: Pricing Submittal Form:	What is the proper information for Bid Category # and Description? Is it from page 15 of 47 or is it from the QPL?	Use the numbers and descriptions in Attachment A of the IFB.
Attachment A, Pg 16	If we are on the QPL for two approved Collections in our line, doesn't it reason that at this time we could offer all our collections as a previously vetted vendor and offer our other collections at the same discount schedule? We are on almost every state contract in the US and GSA but we are not a North Carolina vendor. Will the state to be receptive to our full Commercial Price List offering at this time?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Section 2.4.3, Pg 4	Method #1 - We are already on the QPL and have some products already approved. How can we get more products approved on the QPL for Method #1? From what I have read the only open category for approval for a QPL is Mobile & Folding Furniture? Is that correct? Are those the only new items being added to the existing QPL's at this time?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Section 4.19, Pg 13	Is the vendor to provide their complete catalog electronically or just the items on the QPL?? Can a PDF of the catalog be sent on a compact disk or does it have to be in MS Excel format? What if we have items in our catalog which are not part of a QPL but would like to make available?	The State requires a standard MS Excel format for purposes of its evaluation process.
	Will the state consider using other methods of product qualifications? (ex. Level Certification, ANSI/BIFMA) and if not will the QPL be open for new product listings	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
IFB Section 3.1.1 Qualification by listing in the relevant QPL (Method 1), Page 6 of 47	As a North Carolina manufacturer with current product on Contracts 420B and 425C, we hoped to have the opportunity to grow our business and be able to provide the State with additional and improved products from our new product lines and get the qualified products on the forthcoming new furniture contract. How	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.

	can we add our new product lines to the current IFB unless the QPL's are opened up with ample time for approvals, prior to the close of the new IFB?	
Re: 3.1.1 BID QUALIFICATION page # 6	One of the chairs I have on QPL has been discontinued. On the old contract 425D, all similar chairs (meeting the same specs) are accepted on the contract. May I substitute one of those chairs as a QPL chair for this bid? If not, does a submittal for QPL approval allow a bid?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Re: Attachment A -- PRICING SUBMITTAL FORM page 16 PRODUCT/CATEGORY DESCRIPTION --	Are you asking for The QPL style number pricing as in the past or are you asking for a product line discount?	Neither. The State is seeking discounts for product(s) or product line(s) within a sub-category. May specify different discounts for different products/product lines within a sub-category or in separate sub-categories.
Section 1.0, Page 1	Paragraph 7 states that generally 3-6 vendors will be awarded per bidding category. Some categories in QPL carry as many as 8 vendors. What happens to those vendors not awarded who have gone to the expense to have products approved are now selling to the state and have an established installed base? What vehicle do the users of those products have to match their existing standard? It is also stated that qualified vendors will be awarded. How are you "qualifying" vendors? Is there opportunity for additional QPL products? Why are manufacturers new product introductions not available for inclusion during the life of contract if they pass QPL?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1. The 3-6 awards per category is a general guideline. The State reserves the right to make the number of awards per category as it deems provides the best value to the State in meeting its needs.
Section 4.20, Page 13	Catalog and price books are different items. Also by not having all of a manufactures product on QPL it sounds as if you are requesting a special catalog, Is the State requesting a special catalog?	A special catalog is not required under Section 4.20.
	If I represent a manufacturer who makes quality products, on GSA contract, with multiple state contracts, but has not applied for a QPL with the State of NC, and is not manufactured in NC, is there no way that manufacturer can participate legally in sales to state agencies? If yes, how is this legal?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
	I represent another manufacturer who is on contract, has more products approved on QPLs, but has other products awaiting approval for 7 months. Are you going to maintain this cumbersome and outdated QPL process?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.

IFB Section 1 – Page 1 – Evaluation criteria for qualified bidders:	Two methods have been established, in the current IFB, to allow vendors to submit their products for consideration. The methods have completely different evaluation criteria. The NC manufacturers who hold a GSA schedule are one category, while manufacturers outside NC must be on the QPL. This clearly sets different evaluation methods for similar products based solely on the location of the manufacturer.	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
IFB Section 3.2 – Page 8 –Method of Award:	It appears that the award of the bid will come down to pricing, with the NC manufacturers having a clear advantage. Please explain how this evaluation considers the quality of the product and the appropriateness of the product for the agencies with furniture requirements.	Bids will be evaluated based primarily on pricing discounts from list and a comparison of resulting net prices within a bidding category, considering whether an award provides best value and is in the best interest of the State, as determined by a consideration of: the quality of the product(s) offered, overall completeness and breadth of line offered, previous experience with services of the Vendor, suitability for intended use, delivery terms, and warranty terms. Evaluations will be conducted and awards made separately under each qualification method. See Section 1.0 INTENT, USE, DURATION AND SCOPE and Section 3.3 BID EVALUATION.
	Why vendors located within North Carolina are receiving an unfair advantage of bidding on all GSA approved products, while vendors located outside of NC can only include products approved via the QPL process?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1. See also, G.S. 143-57.1.
3.1, Pgs 6-7	There are 2 methods that allow the mfg to bid. The QPL is a specific product line the State has approved while a GSA contract is basically an entire binder. Does this mean that the GSA avenue allows for more product to be offered to agencies while the QPL avenue is restrictive?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
	Is it the intent of P&C to award 3-6 vendor's as stated in House Bill 449? If the answer is no, what do you anticipate that number to be? If a NC manufacturer uses the GSA Schedule to bypass the QPL process, what steps will be taken (if any) to insure that product meets the	The 3-6 awards per category is a general guideline. The State reserves the right to make the number of awards per category as it deems provides the best value to the State in meeting its needs. Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to

	current requirements of the NC QPL?	question #1.
Section A/Attachment A, page 16	On the pricing submittal form under the product/category description, the State says sufficient to uniquely identify what is being bid; can the State clearly identify a few examples of acceptable identifiers? Will the State accept a statement like, "All SitOnIt Chairs listed on QPL for bid category 10, cross-referenced by SIN Category 711-18 in current price book?"	
Attachment J, page 43	under the QPL category Office Swivel and Side Chair (wood, office side chairs), the State references GSA schedule 71 category 711-18, which is fine for the swivel chairs, but side chairs (and stack) are listed under 711-19. You can verify this on the GSA eLibrary website.	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Section 3.1.1 Page #6	Should we submit all eligible products on both submissions (GSA and QPL) or should each product only be on one submission? For example, if the product is not on the QPL should we submit it on the GSA? We don't want to risk GSA not getting approved if we submit on QPL and only one method is awarded to us.	If a product is qualified under both qualification methods, it may be bid under both methods. Evaluations will be conducted and awards made separately under each qualification method. See Section 1.0 INTENT, USE, DURATION AND SCOPE
Section 3.2 Page #7	If we get awarded on one method of submittal can we still submit a bid for the other. For example, if we are awarded on the QPL can we still submit on GSA or would we have to be awarded in both methods?	Yes. Evaluations will be conducted and awards made separately under each qualification method. See Section 1.0 INTENT, USE, DURATION AND SCOPE
3.1.2 Qualification by listing in the Relevant Federal GSA Furniture Schedule (Method #2), Page 7	We currently have hundreds of models listed on GSA Advantage, but our full GSA contract offering is in the thousands. Can the models approved on our GSA contract, be offered to the State, even if they are not available on GSA Advantage?	No.
Page 7, 3.1.2 Qualification by listing in the Relevant Federal GSA Furniture Schedule (Method #2), Page 7	The State is requesting a GSA Advantage screen shot of each model offered on GSA contract. Since our GSA contract offers thousands of different models, this request seems quite cumbersome. Would it be acceptable to submit a List Pricer where the GSA number is listed identifying each model/series that has been accepted on contract?	While cumbersome, each individual bidder is in a better position to submit screenshots confirming that its own products are available on a GSA schedule than the State is to verify the GSA availability of every product bid by every bidder.
Page 7	Our products are listed on the GSA, but we are not. Could we qualify under the GSA method?	A vendor must be qualified under the relevant GSA furniture schedule as of the bid deadline in order to qualify under the GSA method. See Section 3.1.2 Qualification by listing in the Relevant Federal GSA Furniture Schedule (Method #2).

		See also, G.S. 143-57.1(1a).
3.1.2 – Qualification by Listing in the Relevant Federal GSA Furniture Schedule (Method #2)	Can a manufacturer whose products are available on GSA contract as noted in sub-sections 1-3 of this section, and whose products are frequently sold within the state of North Carolina bid using Method #2? If not, wouldn't the geographical restriction limited to only those manufacturers physically located in the state of North Carolina severely limit a fair and competitive bid?	A vendor must meet all requirements of G.S. 143-57.1(1a) in order to bid under Method #2 (GSA).
	Regarding Method 2 of this proposed contract. If this will be a mirrored GSA scenario, the 1.75% administration fee will exceed GSA's IFF fee of .75% by 1%. Would you consider make the administration fee .75% like GSA ?	No.
	Regarding the use of GSA Advantage as a guideline for approved products. This is my opinion would cause confusion between whether an order is State or Federal. Would you consider eliminating this requirement from the contract ?	Information from GAO Advantage is used only as documentation to be submitted with a bid, as evidence supporting the claim that the product bid under method #2 is available on the relevant GSA furniture schedule. This requirement will remain.
Section 1.0 Page 1	Paragraph 4 references the GS 143-57.1 for the procedures to bid. Is this IFB in compliance with those procedures? Area of question is relative to 143-57.1.1 Sealed bids are to be based upon historical weighted average per category. It does not appear that this document is looking for bids based upon that information.	
Section 1.0 Page 1	With regards to GS 143-57.1 and what is required as a qualifier to GSA in section 1 paragraph 6 it states a company must be a resident and head quartered in North Carolina. The statute in attachment C says that the furniture must be "manufactured" in North Carolina to qualify. Please clarify.	The requirement is in the alternative, either a North Carolina resident company, or products bid are manufactured in North Carolina. See G.S. 143-57.1(a1)(4).
Section 3.1.2 Page 7 & 8	Paragraph 2 it states that the GSA price must be equal to or better than the GSA price. Per GSA guide lines manufacturers are not allowed to sell products better than the GSA scheduled price or they will be in violation of their contract. In addition the GSA price for some contracts is not all ways a delivered price. Some manufacturers have the ability in their GSA contract to charge for services such as design, delivery and installation. How is this aspect of the GSA to be handled? Please clarify.	The structure of the GSA "most favored customer" pricing does not prevent vendors from offering more advantageous pricing to State governments. The U.S. General Accounting Office, in determining a federal award protest, has criticized clauses providing that the "government be given a discount from commercial prices and be assured that it is getting the lowest possible price. P&C is not aware of any such basis for the use of this type of clause in a regular competitive procurement where the basis for award is lowest

		<p>(reasonable) price. In such situations, the government is entitled only to the lowest price that the competition produces, and not to a guarantee that the price will not be lower for other agencies or under other circumstances. See GAO Decision, <i>In re Sorbus, Inc.</i> B-183942 (1976).</p> <p>[The allowable charges and rates have been revised. See amended Section 4.1 PRICING, amended section 4.6 TRANSPORTATION FOR DELIVERY, and amended section 4.7 DELIVERY, OUT-OF-STOCK, AND BACK-ORDERS.]</p>
5.1 Page 13	Why is this section included? Shouldn't this be covered under the QPL method or the GSA method?	This is a general specification required for all products bid, regardless of product description or bidding method.
	Can ANSI-BIFMA approval not be listed as a requirement for Sections 9-13?" And a follow up to that is: "If it is deemed necessary, can you please put in a 6-9 or 6-12 month window for approval?"	Existing QPLs have been suspended and interim specifications have been established. See answer to question #1. Products must meet applicable specifications as of the bidding deadline.
	We cannot follow our GSA contract pricing as the GSA contract is set up to have freight, delivery and installation as a different cost – we can follow for product only or we will be in violation of our contract.	
	Regarding the use of GSA Advantage as a guideline for approved products Would you consider eliminating this requirement from the contract?	NO
Section 3.1.2 page 7	If we are already qualified under one QPL but have products that would also fall under other QPL'S we would like to bid, and these products are on GSA, why can't are only the companies based in North Carolina permitted to bid on these additional categories?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Section 1.0	General Statute 143-57.1 states in (a1) 3 products offered must be done with the same pricing and specifications as the vendor's products on GSA. This is generally for the cost of the product alone and design and installation services are added as additional line items. Should this not be stated on the IFB, and subsequently the contract, to make sure	

	the agency is prepared for these costs to be added, and that the vendor does not risk being in violation of their approved GSA schedule and pricing? Qualifying product to be bid by it being on a GSA schedule would help with the problems associated with the QPL process, but mandating these products be bid at the GSA pricing should be re-visited.	
	Our company offers GSA a 55% off list prices discount, but GSA allows us to charge for freight. How can we mirror the same discount but we are not allowed to charge for freight?	
	Are vendors with products currently on the QPL able to utilize the GSA schedule to price same products even though products are not manufactured in North Carolina? If yes, are we allowed to include "all" products within the same family of single product line that is approved on QPL? Example, Improve HE chair is approved on QPL. We make several chairs or a "family" of seating within the Improve line. All Improve chairs are on GSA. Can we include in this bid response?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Section 4.1	Bid price includes delivery, assembly and installation (ready for use.) Note: GSA does NOT include these services as part of product price. Dealer/Vendor will lose money to deliver this transaction. Delivery, freight, and installation need to be quoted separately which is consistent with GSA schedule. Please confirm this will be changed in the NC State bid revision.	
	Pricing Submittal form – Tier structure requested is different than GSA tiers. Vendors on GSA schedule will not be able to offer State of North Carolina a discount better than offered to GSA. Are we allowed to revise the tiers on the pricing sheet to match GSA tiers?	The discount tiers in Attachment A are modified to allow a vendor to set its own tier levels.
Price Adjustments (Page 42)	Prices bid shall be held constant for the first year of the contract The Vendor may request a price increase at the start of the 2nd and 3rd year. Note: If State of North Carolina wants GSA match pricing, then price increases will follow same schedule as those accepted by GSA. Request revising this statement to match GSA policy.	
Section 3.1 Bid	Can you drop the requirement for that "the	This requirement is statutory.

Qualification, 3.1.2 (Method #2), item (3), page 7 of 47	price bid for such product(s) is at least as favorable as is listed on the GSA schedule.”?	See G.S. 143-57.1(a1).
Section 3.1 Bid Qualification, 3.1.2 (Method #2), item (4) on page 7 of 47	Question: Can the term vendor be extended to authorized dealer vendors with a principal place of business in North Carolina selling products “available for purchase on a schedule within the federal General Services Administration (GSA) Furniture Schedule (Schedule 71).”?	The statutory requirement is that the vendor bidding must be a “federally qualified vendor within the GSA Furniture Schedule.” See G.S. 143-57.1(a1).
3.1.2. Qualification by listing in the relevant Federal GSA Furniture Schedule (Method #2), Page 7	Paragraph 2 of this section states that products submitted must appear on the GSA Advantage! Website. It is widely recognized that many products offered on GSA contracts do not appear on GSA Advantage! This is due to the complexity in specifying many products on contract. For example lounge seating that consists of multiply components and available in a wide array of coverings. Can this requirement be removed? 4.1	
4.1 Pricing, Page 9	Paragraph 1 states bid price shall "include all applicable charges for delivery, fully assembled and read for use." This indicates that vendor is responsible for installation. However this bid document does not allow for a separate charge for installation. Under GSA, there are specific SIN's that allow for service items e.g. installation, design services and project management. Can provision be added for this?	
	Our company is a North Carolina company and provides furniture for schools, colleges, daycares and early head start programs across North Carolina, the U.S. and to military programs worldwide. Our contract is not under Schedule 71 because GSA delayed reviewing our contract submission for Schedule 71 for over a year. In the meantime, we submitted our furniture items along with other products on Schedule 78 and were awarded a GSA contract	By statute the GSA schedule must be a furniture schedule. Schedule 78 is not a furniture schedule. See G.S. 143-57.1(a1).
Section 2.4.3, Pg 4	Can we only use our GSA contract for Method #2, if principle place of business/headquarters is located in North Carolina or if the products bid by the	Yes.

	Vendor are manufactured or produced in NC.	
Reference section 3.1.2	We are a GSA schedule 71 contract holder and our corporate headquarters is in Charlotte. Our schedule is a "Packaged Office" contract meaning we have multiple manufacturers' products available on our GSA schedule. All will be offered at the GSA price established by the manufacturer. Will we be allowed to qualify under this model?	A North Carolina resident business may bid any product on its GSA schedule, under Method #2.
Reference section 3.1.2	The State has requested documentation via a screen capture on GSA Advantage. Using a GSA schedule format will open up literally thousands of possibilities under each manufacturer. A chair with the available fabrics and options can result in hundreds of possible part numbers. All GSA manufacturers have published pricing matrixes that state the discount off of list. Will providing the pricing matrix from the manufacturer be sufficient documentation of GSA pricing? We can also provide current price books that show the current list price of each item that the discount will be applied to.	
Reference section 3.1.2	Will the State award under the GSA model all products under the category for which we have bid? For example, will all manufacturers seating be allowed under the award?	Not necessarily. The awards in each category will depend on the number of bids and the State's needs.
Reference section 4.1	When using a GSA pricing model, installation services are not included in the GSA prices. GSA discounting is usually a deeper discount than what the QPL would have provided for when a manufacturer knew installation services had to be included. Will the State allow for installation services to be billed as part of a GSA pricing proposal? Recommendation – Each GSA schedule has allowances for the amounts that may be charged for installation services. This is published and should be required to be submitted as part of the bid package.	
Reference section 4.4	With the addition of so many items available under a GSA model, will the state consider an extension of time allowed to prepare a line item catalog for the E-Procurement site? Would the State like to limit the online catalog to a group of the most popular items available from a	

	manufacturer?	
	With the addition of many products and a more complete furniture offering available under the GSA options, will the State consider allowing larger procurements to be awarded to State Contract Vendors without the project going out to bid?	This solicitation does not specify any abnormal order quantity or value, above which a procurement must be competitively bid.
	If systems and filing are not part of this contract, will a GSA method vendor be allowed to include those items in projects for customers requiring those items so long as it is part of their GSA schedule and pricing matrixes?	No.
	Under GSA method, can dealers charge for delivery and install	
Reference 1.0- page 1.	We have product on both North Carolina QPL and on GSA MAS contract, Schedule 71. We request confirmation that during the bid evaluation there is no additional consideration or weight given to holders of a QPL. Does the state anticipate removing or updating the QPL structure in the future? If the State intends to award to 3-6 qualified Vendors per category only, is there any additional criteria required to insure the State has the flexibility to source all furniture within the product category- from executive private office level to high traffic open area need in the State?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Reference 3.1.2 - Qualification...-page 7	May we show a representative of one product within a product category screen shot from GSA Advantage! On Line that will cover the breadth of the category? Would you consider another source for verification? Many manufacturers in the furniture industry have product within a category that is on GSA MAS schedule, but not on GSA Advantage! As furniture can be customized to a client's requirement- especially in product category (a) casegoods, there is no way to include every single product configuration on GSA Advantage. Within GSA Advantage, there is a representation of the product, and then a link to a corporate website that allows the end user to see the many features and options available to choose from within that product and product category.	*****

	A resource that you may want to consider using is E-library.gov. This shows the most up to date schedule with GSA. http://www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov/ElibMain/home.do	
Reference 4.1- Pricing- page 9/ Reference 4.5- Authorized Dealers/ Reference 4.6 Transportation for Delivery page 10	What is the procurement structure under E-Procurement as it pertains to term contract ? Is it the intent of the State to allow agencies to source direct and through a dealer for product on the contract? Requesting your review on how to structure E-Procurement to allow for a purchase of not only product, but also include line items for freight to the dealer, and the dealer's D&I	The purpose of a term contract is to allow State agencies to forward purchase orders directly to awarded vendors and their authorized dealers without a requirement of issuing a separate solicitation for competitive bids. *****
3.1, Pgs 6-7	The QPL is a specific product line the State has approved while a GSA contract is basically an entire binder. Does this mean that the GSA avenue allows for more product to be offered to agencies while the QPL avenue is restrictive?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
	Will you consider product lines on GSA schedules from manufacturers not based in NC?	Not unless the product bid is manufactured or produced in North Carolina. See section 3.1.2.
Section 3.1 Bid Qualification, 3.1.2 (Method #2), item (3), page 7 of 47	Can you drop the requirement for that "the price bid for such product(s) is at least as favorable as is listed on the GSA schedule."?	The requirement is statutory. See G.S. 143-57.1(a1)
Section 3.1.1, Page 6	Can you please advise if a non-resident of North Carolina can utilize the GSA option for the solicitation due to the QPL length of time for approval?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1. Non-residents are not qualified to bid under the GSA option.
Section 3.1.1, Page 6	If a vendor is able to utilize the GSA option, can we negotiate the discount due to the terms of our contract being FOB Factory compared to the RFQ requirement of FOB Destination? And if so how do we note this on our submission?	No.
2.5, Bid Contents, sections J and K, page 5	If the manufacture doesn't qualify for sections J and K, do we still need to include them in the bid packet as blank copies or can we leave them out?	Inclusion of Sections J and K is mandatory only if the must be completed in order to qualify certain products the vendor is bidding.
2.5, Bid Contents, Separate Document (not part of the bid)	Can you explain in more detail what is needed? Is says "section 2.7", but did it mean "2.6"	The reference is corrected to "Section 2.7." A vendor is required to accept the State's terms and conditions as a condition of submitting its bid, but the State will

		consider in good faith proposed modifications to specific terms and conditions made by the vendor in a separate document submitted with its bid.
Attachment A: Pricing Submittal Form:	Are the discount tiers on Attachment A suggestions or are they final? Are different discount tiers allowed to be proposed?	The discount tiers in Attachment A are modified to allow a vendor to set its own tier levels.
Page 9 of 47, 4.1 Pricing	the description given in section 4.1 that all furniture must be delivered fully assembled is most unusual. Products such as tables and some desking systems are shipped KD to save on the cost of freight. This level of service would be a costly to the customers of North Carolina	
Attachment A, Pg 15-16 Pricing Submittal Form	can be used for all Categories if the discount schedule is the same correct?	A separate Attachment A must be completed for each category in which a vendor wishes to bid. Each Attachment A must identify those products/product lines being bid in that category.
Attachment A, Pg 16	Pricing Submittal Form under Bidding Categories, do we fill in the collections we want to bid or are they listed on the following page 16 of 47 on the lines below Product/Category Description? It doesn't seem like there is very much room? Please clarify.	If additional space is needed, additional pages should be attached listing each product/product line, a brief description and the applicable percentage discount.
QUALIFICATION BY LISTING IN THE RELEVANT GSA FURNITURE SCHEDULE	GSA approved products offer a multitude of options, consisting of thousands of model and GSA does not require that all model be shown in GSA Advantage. Please clarify that the State does not wish to have hundreds or thousands of pages submitted with each bid since this would not very well support your Sustainability efforts noted in Attachment H. Would a copy of GSA terms and conditions showing discounts, and an electronic copy of GSA price lists which denotes the applicable GSA SIN number below each approved model number be acceptable for a Method #2 submission?	
	If your product is on GSA and you are a North Carolina company, can this product be considered acceptable for the QPL for North Carolina rather than having to go through the long QPL approval process?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Section 4.1 Page #9 & Attachment A Page 16	The GSA Bid Method asks for a discount that includes delivery and install. GSA pricing is a dock delivered price not including installation. Dealers provide the federal government end-users pricing for install and design services. The bid asks	

	for manufacturers to match GSA prices so that is a dock delivered price with no install. How do we handle install? Can we give a percentage or does the state want to work with our authorized dealers to get install pricing per job like the federal government? Can you add separate lines for design and installation, otherwise no one can comply with the GSA requirements of their contract and also the dealers have to be able to make a profit?	
Section 3.1.2 Page #7	Can a dealer who is headquartered in the State represent a manufacturer on GSA if the manufacturer does not have their headquarters or manufacturing plant in the state?	No. The statutory requirement is that the vendor bidding must be a "federally qualified vendor within the GSA Furniture Schedule." See G.S. 143-57.1(a1).
3.1.2(3)	IFB request "price bid for such product(s) is at least as favorable as is listed on the GSA schedule." This in many cases is a violation of the manufacturer's GSA contract and also reflects a level of pricing commensurate with the national buying power of the Federal Government. It was discussed in the Pre-Bid meeting that GSA was intended as a vetting measure for product quality, not necessarily a guide for discount and price structure. will this requirement listed remain firm?	
3.1.2	Many products that a manufacturer might carry on their GSA contract may not be listed on GSA Advantage! It is unrealistic to list all parts and pieces and sizes. Would catalog pages and appropriate GSA Terms and Conditions pages listing discounts and terms be acceptable?	
3.3.4	How will the State evaluate bids based on Discount structure without full construction and specification information that might reflect a different List calculation. An inflated list and deeper Discount from list could sway the evaluation from a more appropriately priced, higher quality product.	Bids will be evaluated based primarily on pricing discounts from list and a comparison of resulting net prices within a bidding category, considering whether an award provides best value and is in the best interest of the State, as determined by a consideration of: the quality of the product(s) offered, overall completeness and breadth of line offered, previous experience with services of the Vendor, suitability for intended use, delivery terms, and warranty terms.
4.1	The delivered and installed pricing creates many challenges for manufactures and dealers. First, the installed GSA pricing would violate most GSA Contracts. Second, installed pricing is expected to be upheld for 1 chair in Manteo or Murphrey	

	or 150 in downtown Raleigh. It is nearly impossible to appropriately price for both scenarios and to the states disadvantage to require dealers and manufacturers to do so. Third, there is no opportunity to capture or market other services such as design and project management, both of which could be utilized by state entities to their advantage on projects. Would the State considered a separate services line structure for pricing?	
4.5	This section indicates that an Authorized Dealer can submit a bid but in the pre-bid meeting it seemed as though only manufacturers can submit. Can you please clarify that?	An authorized dealer may submit a bid if it otherwise qualifies to bid under the requirements of the IFB.
4.5	If a dealer submits via the GSA method, are they restricted to only do so ifg they hold a Schedule 71 contract or can they submit for any manufacturer that is on GSA Contract, for which they are an authorized dealer?	The statutory requirement is that the vendor bidding must be a "federally qualified vendor within the GSA Furniture Schedule." See G.S. 143-57.1(a1).
3.1, Pgs 6-7	There are 2 methods that allow the mfg to bid. Having product on the existing QPL(which we do) or having a GSA contract (which we do). The QPL is a specific product line the State has approved while a GSA contract is basically an entire binder. Does this mean that the GSA avenue allows for more product to be offered to agencies while the QPL avenue is restrictive?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.

MISC. QUESTIONS

IFB Section 4.20 Physical Catalog, page 13	If the vendor receives a request for a physical catalog, is the Manufacturer's catalog acceptable or is the catalog required to only have the items awarded to vendor by the State of North Carolina?	If a vendor receives a catalog request from a user of the contract awarded as a result of this IFB, a manufacturer's catalog would be acceptable. A State user will be responsible for ordering only those items available to it for purchase in accordance with State law.
Attachment H: Instruction to Vendor #8 Specifications, page 33	This section references Attachment B: Deviations from Requirements and Specifications. Attachment B is Vendor Information. There is no attachment labeled Deviations from Requirements and Specifications. Would you please provide this attachment? Attachment B: Deviations from Requirements and Specifications is also referenced on page 5 of 47 under the description of Section F.	Delete paragraph 8 on page 33. Also, delete phrase "ATTACHMENT B: DEVIATIONS FROM REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS" and replace that reference with "ATTACHMENT F: DESCRIPTION OF EXECUTIVE ORDER #50."
Attachment H: Instruction to Vendor	The language in G.S. 143-59 refers to States. When researching G.S. 143-59,	Reciprocal preference does not apply to Canadian residents.

#13 Reciprocal Preference, page 34	the NAFTA website states that Reciprocal Preference can be waived for Canadian Manufacturers. Would the State be willing to waive the Reciprocal Preference for Canadian companies? If the State will be using Reciprocal Preference for Canadian companies, would you please state the percentage?	
IFB Section 4.4 Line Item Catalog, page 9	There is a link to an example of the line item catalog. This link takes you to an error page that states that the page cannot be found. Would you please provide a working link, web address, or copy of the State's standard template, so that we may see an example?	The correct link is: http://www.ncpandc.gov/clogtemp.a.spx
Attachment I: North Carolina General Contract Terms and Conditions # 18 Electronic Procurement and Usage Fees, page 40	Is the 1.75% Transaction Fee imposed on installation/unboxing/set-up costs, as well as the items being purchased?	The transaction fee is imposed only on the cost of the goods, if any allowable cost of services is separately listed on the invoice. If not separated, then fees will be charged on entire amount.
On page 10, par. 4.6	It states that prices "shall deliver FOB Destination" . Then in 4.7 it mentions delivery to "loading dock or area inside a building". Next paragraph in same section states " vendor shall furnish all necessary parts, labor,to deliver and, if required, install, ready for owner's use". Should the contract prices include delivery to owner's location dock only or include delivery to owner's location and install/set in place ready for use?	Delivery requirements in section 4.7 has been clarified. See amended language in this Addendum.
3.1.2 Qualification by listing in the Relevant Federal GSA Furniture Schedule (Method #2), Page 7	It appears the State is interested in piggybacking off the GSA contract. Would it be acceptable for vendors to submit an alternative contract vehicle to the State, as long as the contract offered has been competitively bid?	The State is not "piggybacking" off the GSA contract. The State is utilizing a vendor's qualification for the GSA contract as a mechanism to qualify the vendor to bid for an award of the State contract. Alternative contract vehicles will not be considered.
	Would you consider opening up the GSA prequalification to out of state manufacturers also for this additional reason?	No. The State is required to follow the statutory process in G.S. 143-57.1 for qualifying vendors to bid on the items in this IFB.
	Will you consider product lines that have been submitted for QPL review before the solicitation came out, but not yet reviewed by the bid opening (because of backlog in review), pending their later passing the prequalification?	A product or product line must have been accepted for inclusion on the relevant QPL by the bidding deadline in order to be considered.

<p>IFB Section 4.7 - Delivery, Out-of-Stock, and Back-Orders Pages 10 - 11</p>	<p>It is stated that "Buyer may request Vendor to provide for unboxing, set-up at user location and a demonstration of the functionality of a product." The IFB goes on and discusses pricing for such services, stating a maximum charge of \$126.</p> <p>Can you clarify this?</p>	<p>Delivery requirements in section 4.7 have been clarified. See amended language in this Addendum.</p>
	<p>What does the State define as a return that requires a refund? As a company we typically do not accept returns; however, we can and possibly will make an exception for the purposes of this contract. Please provide clarification on the State's return policy.</p>	<p>Vendor shall provide full credit or full refund to Buyers without assessing any restocking fee, whichever a Buyer requests, within thirty (30) business days on all returns of an ordered product that (1) is in original packaging and in re-sellable conditions; (2) is not a specialty or customized item, and the Buyer has been notified in writing at the time of placement of order of the restocking fee; (3) is due to damage; (4) is a return of an incorrect product shipped; (5) results from a Vendor order entry error; or (6) is non-conforming due to any other cause reasonably assumed to be the fault of the Vendor.</p>
<p>Section 4.2, paragraph 1 [pg 9 of 47]</p>	<p>Why is the freight threshold for furniture only \$50.00? Would the State consider increasing the threshold to an amount more appropriate for this commodity, such as around \$1,000 Net or something like that?</p>	<p>The threshold is amended to \$250.</p>
<p>Section 4.7, paragraph 3 [pg 11 of 47]</p>	<p>Would a bidder be considered unresponsive if they took exception to this clause or proposed alternative language to bring it in-line with industry standard operations appropriate to the commodity? Or only applicable to stocked products? BACKGROUND – It creates a tremendous operational challenges to be able to accommodate this in terms of manufacturing customized furniture.</p>	<p>A vendor is required to accept the State's terms and conditions as a condition of submitting its bid, but the State will consider in good faith proposed modifications to specific terms and conditions made by the vendor in a separate document submitted with its bid.</p> <p>See Section 2.7.</p>
<p>Section 10, paragraph 1 [pg 11 of 47]</p>	<p>Would a bidder be considered unresponsive if they took exception to this clause or proposed alternative language to bring it in-line with their Warranty?</p>	<p>A vendor is required to accept the State's terms and conditions as a condition of submitting its bid, but the State will consider in good faith proposed modifications to specific terms and conditions made by the vendor in a separate document submitted with its bid.</p>
<p>Section 4.11, paragraph 1 [pg 11 of 47]</p>		<p>A vendor is required to accept the State's terms and conditions as a condition of submitting its bid, but the State will consider in good faith</p>

		proposed modifications to specific terms and conditions made by the vendor in a separate document submitted with its bid.
Section 4.12, paragraph 1 [pg 12 of 47]	Would a bidder be considered unresponsive if they took exception to this clause or proposed alternative language to bring it in-line with their Warranty and Return Policies?	A vendor is required to accept the State's terms and conditions as a condition of submitting its bid, but the State will consider in good faith proposed modifications to specific terms and conditions made by the vendor in a separate document submitted with its bid.
Attachment E, #a [pg 26 of 47]	Does 'any work under this contract' include Manufacturing?	If the manufacturing occurs specifically to fulfill the contract, then it must be disclosed on Attachment E. If a vendor merely purchases for resale products manufactured elsewhere, then such manufacturing work would be excluded.
Attachment I, Section 18, paragraph 2 [pg 40 of 47]		
Attachment B, page 18	Do the distribution points include dealer locations?	
Page 1	Is preschool and kindergarten furniture included in section (b) classroom furniture 8 furniture, library, wooden?	
Section 4.11 basically states that we must be willing to accept returned products within 30 days after receipt for any reason, if they are still in the original packaging.	We build each and every piece of furniture we make to order. Once it is built, we cannot just take it back and put it on a shelf to be sold later, it will likely never be sold later with those exact specifications, and we build and ship furniture, we don't inventory it or put it on shelves somewhere.	
IFB Section 4.11 Return Policy & 4.12 Restocking Policy	How do we as a custom, made-to-order manufacturer deal with the Return Policy and Restocking Policy? The highly regarded, 70 year old manufacturer we plan to submit for the IFB bid solicitation is a company which produces all custom, made-to-order products based on the customer's specifications. The customer or architect must specify the precise materials they desire including frame configuration options, textiles, and finishes. This means that every order is, in effect, custom-made and unique to that customer. Because of this customization, the manufacturer has an appropriately limited restocking policy. The minimum charge is	

	<p>a set percentage, and the manufacturer specifically reserves the right to refuse restock depending on the precise configuration of the furniture in question. Is there an exception to both requirements 4.11 and 4.12 that we may write into our offer and how do we handle that in our bid submittal?</p>	
	<p>Would you consider making this a 4-5 year contract, verses a 2 year contract with 1 year renewal? If a proper contract is decided on, the extended length of time would be a cost and time savings to both the State and vendors.</p>	
	<p>Regarding annual price increases. It states in the proposed contract that the State has the right to reject any request for price increase. In the past, that has been my major concern with the current contract. It actually took me over 3 years to get a price increase responded to and approved. Since vendors incur annual increases of raw material, etc, will you consider an annual price increase if documented that the price increase was submitted commercially to our commercial customers ?</p>	
	<p>Regarding the use of GSA Advantage as a guideline for approved products. This is my opinion would cause confusion between whether an order is State or Federal. Would you consider eliminating this requirement from the contract ?</p>	
	<p>If we wanted to add a new product to our price list, during the two year initial term, and sell it on the state contract how would we need to pursue approval for a new product after the start date of this new contract.</p>	
	<p>Will we need to include shipping and install in our list pricing or will we be able to quote shipping and install as a separate line item when pricing projects being purchased from the state contract.</p>	
	<p>we have some of our dealers who would like to sell our products in NC under this new state contract. Will we be able to hold the contract with the state and then add a dealer to sell our products throughout the state?</p>	<p>A vendor may use authorized dealers to fulfill orders placed directly with the vendor. In that case, the vendor retains all responsibility for satisfactory performance under the contract. Only dealers authorized to send</p>

		invoices or receive payment must be listed in a vendor's bid and be registered in the e-procurement system.
Section 1.0 Page 1	The IFB states current state contracts covered. It does not call out the file contract 425H. In addition there are additional furnishing needs such as dorm room furnishings, panel systems, Booths, Metal library shelving, Science tables, Art Tables, Study Carrels, Pre K furniture and outdoor furniture to name a few. Would it be prudent to cover those items during this process?	The State has determined that its best interest is served by the current scope of contract.
Section 1.0 Page 1	Paragraph 4 references the GS 143-57.1 for the procedures to bid. Is this IFB in compliance with those procedures? Area of question is relative to 143-57.1.1 Sealed bids are to be based upon historical weighted average per category. It does not appear that this document is looking for bids based upon that information.	
Section 2.4.3 Page 4	The IFB states that the bid must be in a PDF format capable of being copied to a Microsoft file. In order to do this please provide the response documents in a format that is capable of being reproduced including all addenda that may be generated as we do not want to alter bid documents.	The phrase "including readable in Microsoft Word and/or Microsoft Excel" is deleted.
Section 2.5 Page 4	The bid states to submit a bid form for each product or product line within a category. Please clarify this requirement. For instance, under the current computer contract there are 4 categories with 4 styles as called out by the QPL. Are we to bid each category within the specific QPL? How does this apply when bidding the GSA method?	
Section 2.5 Page 4	There are multiple variations of products amongst the potential bidders. Without a specific standard how does the state intend to compare the data submitted from each of the vendor's bids in order to make a fair and equitable analysis when comparing pricing? Using discount from list does not necessarily compute to lowest total delivered and installed net price.	Bids will be evaluated based primarily on pricing discounts from list and a comparison of resulting net prices within a bidding category, considering whether an award provides best value and is in the best interest of the State, as determined by a consideration of: the quality of the product(s) offered, overall completeness and breadth of line offered, previous experience with services of the Vendor, suitability for intended use, delivery terms, and warranty terms.

4.1 Page 9	Why not offer a discount structure that would allow the end user to take advantage of not having a delivered and installed product? Discount categories would be delivered, Inside delivery and delivered installed and ready for use.	
4.2 Page 9	Implementing a minimum order charge at a rate of \$50.00 is not a fair level. In past contracts the minimum order was much higher	The minimum order amount is amended to \$250.
4.7 Page 10 & 11	We assume this section is to allow for cost of product demonstration such as showing the features on a task chair and not installation. Please clarify.	
4.11 Page 11 & 12	Return policy. Furniture is not an off the shelf product. It is made to order. Under this contract requirement all items are delivered and installed. It is not possible for furniture manufacturers to be able to accept returns for products at no cost if an end user decides after the time of initial delivery they simply change their mind about wanting the item. There are costs such as freight, packaging, delivery and installation that also must be considered. Actually some furniture is made custom by selection of alternate materials from standard offerings of a manufacturer. In those instances it may be necessary to charge for early cancellation of an order that may be in production but not yet delivered.	
4.16 Page 12	This contract does not cover all furniture procured through state entities and it would be in the best interest of those entities if additional items were added. Those items include but not limited to such as dorm room furnishings, panel systems, Booths, Metal library shelving, Science tables, Art Tables, Study Carrels, Pre K furniture and outdoor furniture to name a few.	The State has determined that the current scope of the contract is in the best interest of the State.
4.19 Page 13	For many vendors the catalog and the price list are separate items. The IFB is asking for a special catalog of the items proposed along with the MSRP of those items. This is an unrealistic task for many of the vendors who will be bidding this contract. It clearly states not to include the net price for those items. It would be in the best interest of the state for the net price to	

	be included with this information as to make the source selection process easier.	
4.19 Page 13	In paragraph 4 it states that the state may request a copy of the catalog at any time after the award with Net price included. This is confusing as to why you would not want Net pricing at time of bid and then ask for net pricing post award.	
4.19 Page 13	How does this information relate to the Pricing submittal form?	
4.20 Page 13	In this day and time of protecting our environment and the use of electronic media it is not the most eco-friendly idea to send out large catalogs to end user especially when they may be interested in seeing a simple item that can be better represented on a manufacturer's web site and in less time. In addition catalogs are very expensive to produce and can cost a considerable amount of money to ship and or deliver. This area of concern is a prime example of the need of having proper dealer service representatives established to call on the end users and assist them with source selections. This service is a cost factor not being considered in this IFB.	This solicitation is for the purchase of goods only. Optional incidental services are not within the scope of the IFB.
Attachment A.: Page 15	<p>This document is not all inclusive of the sub categories as called out in the QPL and the specifications. For instance, Wood Office desk has four sub categories, Library furniture has four and computer furniture has four categories and four sub categories. This multiple sub category situation is true for all of the major categories listed.</p> <p>It may be true that a manufacturer is only listed in one sub category on the QPL but they may offer the best discount. If the selection is based solely on lowest discount per top level category the state may not have a full offering of the furniture required. In many instances this is true that not all of the sub categories are offered by all of the manufacturers on the QPL.</p>	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Pricing Submittal form: Page 16 & 17	It is unclear as to how this form should be filled out especially when considering the multiple categories that may be involved. Some manufacturers may only offer one sub category while others may offer products for most of the products on the QPL's. Shouldn't the form ask for the	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1. A separate Pricing Submittal form should be completed for each bidding category and particular discount structure bid.

	specific QPL number and sub category that is being bid?	
Pricing Submittal form: Page 16 & 17	It asks for the manufacturers' warranty in terms of years but no consideration is given as what that warranty covers. In the area of upholstered goods you may have a structural frame warranty that maybe 5 years and then have an upholstery warranty that is 1 year as an example. Other furniture has other types of warranties that may break down the components of the furniture rather than a total inclusive product warranty.	If different components of the warranty have different lengths, the differences should be noted on the Pricing Submittal form. See also, Section 4.10 WARRANTY [?? require copy of warranty with bid??]
Attachment C: Page 21	How is the following requirement being covered by this IFB? Competitive, sealed bids must be solicited for the contract in accordance with Article 3 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes unless otherwise provided for by the State Purchasing Officer pursuant to that Article. Bids shall be solicited on a historical weighted average of specific contract items and not on a single item within a class of items. Historical weighted average shall be based on information derived from the State's electronic procurement system, when available, or other available data. Subject to the provisions of this section, bids shall be evaluated and the contract awarded in accordance with Article 3 of Chapter 143 of the General Statutes.	
Section 1.0, Page 1	It states in the RFP "In addition, accessories, attachments or optional items that are related to and normally sold with or as part of a product, product line or identified grouping of items in one of the above categories may be included in a bid submittal". Along with the examples in the bid would this also include product such as monitor arms, keyboard systems and lights?	The category "accessories, attachments or optional items" is intended to include items designed and intended to supplement or enhance the base product, such as a headrest that may or may not be included with an executive chair, or an ottoman that may or may not be included with a lounge seating group. It does not include items that are used on or with, but are not related to the function of, the base item, such as a generic keyboard tray or a desk or table lamp.
Section 1.0, Page 1	Referencing the above statement again, if a vendor/dealer is selling a computer table or workstation, since ergonomic tools would be attachments to the workstation, would the vendor/dealer be able to sell keyboard trays, monitor arms as a part of that workstation/table?	The standard is not whether an item can be attached to a base item, but whether the item is designed and intended as a supplement or option for the base item. Items not submitted in a bid are not included.
Section 2.5 Bid Contents, Section F:	Completed and signed version of IFB ATTACHMENT F: DESCRIPTION OF EXECUTIVE ORDER #50 or an affirmative	Page 4 of Attachment F includes a space for execution. If no price match opportunity is requested, the

	<p>statement on ATTACHMENT B: DEVIATIONS FROM REQUIREMENTS AND SPECIFICATIONS form that confirms that no price match opportunity is requested.</p> <p>Attachment F does not have an area to be signed if you are not requesting a price-match & Attachment B: Deviations from Requirements and Specifications form was not included in the bid package.</p>	<p>signature need not be notarized.</p> <p>The reference to Attachment B is amended to provide: "ATTACHMENT F: DESCRIPTION OF EXECUTIVE ORDER #50."</p>
Section 4.1 Pricing, page #9	Can you define what fully assembled and ready for use means? Are chairs that are already assembled and in a box considered ready for use?	"Fully assembled and ready for use" means that no additional work is needed to complete or prepare the product for normal use, except for additions or modifications that may be performed without tools, such as placement of adjustable shelves or adjustments to meet individual needs or tastes. A fully-assembled item still in the box may be considered ready for use.
	We are a manufacturer of 'public seating' (ganged seating) and we will only fall into one category. Most of these units require assembly – is there a way that freight and installation can be a separate line item?	
	Including freight in the overall price is difficult to roll into the cost of the product – if only one or two units are ordered, generally we lose money on the freight, the only way to do it is to provide tiered pricing, which becomes difficult to manage and understand.	
	All of our products are 'made to order' – upholstery is picked per job, frame colors are picked per job, by the end user. The 30 day return policy is not a viable option on 'made to order' projects.	
	What will be the minimum amount of an order before it has to go out to tender?	The amount is in the discretion of each purchasing agency.
Section 1.0	Can you offer some clarity on how the historical weighted average will be used? Does the State have enough data to use this as a barometer?	
Section 1.0	Is the intent to limit the categories to 3-6 vendors? This could very well limit the options in many categories for the agencies and potentially hurt the vendor community that has supported the State of NC.	The 3-6 awards per category is a general guideline. The State reserves the right to make the number of awards per category as it deems provides the best value to the State in meeting its needs.

Section 4.	Some consideration should be given to minimum orders. Would the State consider allowing a delivery/set up fee for orders less than \$1500.00? A 5% fee would not pay for the costs of delivery, but it would help reduce the loss of delivery on small orders.	The minimum order amount is amended to \$250.
Section 4.	Why would the State not pay a restocking fee for merchandise purchased via a purchase order and subsequently cancelled after production of the product has begun? Vendors that produce new merchandise for orders placed charge restocking fees to cover some of their losses when product must be returned.	
Section 4.	The return policy should be eliminated. Doesn't the agency have some responsibility to approve the purchase of merchandise? The potential costs associated with allowing returns and refunds after production and delivery of merchandise could be financially harmful. If the product is not shipped as order or has damages, returns would be acceptable.	
Attachment I Item #22 Price Adjustments	Is the contract initial term for 2 or 3 years? Page 2 Item 2.2 it states it is a 2 year term but on page 42 item #22 it states it is a three-year contract term.	The contract is for an initial term of two years, with an option to extend for up to one additional year.
Page 10 Item #4.7 Delivery, Out-of-Stock, and Back-Orders	The stated installation charges are too low (many dealers concerned that they would lose money on stated charges) and do not allow for quoting per project based on access to the building, elevator access, type of product, etc. Can this be adjusted to either have installation be quoted per project or a range of percentage allowable?	
Pricing Submittal Form	Pricing on a single item is the same as if they bought 100. Could there be a surcharge or minimum order charge for such small quantities?	The discount tiers in Attachment A are modified to allow a vendor to set its own tier levels.
Page 12 Item 4.12 Restocking Policy	As furniture is custom made (i.e. finish and fabric) can you confirm this would not be applicable in this case?	
Page 16 Pricing Submittal Form	This form seems confusing (Product/Category Description). Can it be revised?	
Page 40 Item 18. Electronic Procurement Usage	How should we request to change the payment of the transaction fee to be paid after invoicing rather than at the issuance	Standard practice is to invoice vendor for the e-procurement transaction fee upon payment of the

and Fees:	of the purchase order?	vendor's invoice for the goods purchased.
Page 49 Occasional Tables	It is referenced to see attached Appendix but there is no Appendix referencing Occasional Tables. Can this be added?	The reference to an Appendix is modified to "See Attachment K."
4.19, Pg 13	If the same product is available under multiple categories, would you prefer that it is listed twice in the electronic copy of proposed catalog (once for each category)?	
3.1.1. Qualifications by listing: (method #1)	How come there is not a printed schedule listing dates as to when products will be evaluated.	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
4.1 Pricing	Contract pricing including all charges for delivery, fully assembled & ready for use is not practical as some items do not have any assembly, while others need complete assembly. Why can't Assigned Dealers charge a reasonable amount of 12-15% for delivery & installation, so products can be completely assembled and installed?	
4.4 Line Item Catalog	All our products are custom made to order, mandating an E-Procurement System is NOT practical for furniture as there are too many options to consider. Will this be an absolute requirement?	Yes.
Attachment A	Pricing Submittal Form: Bidding Categories: Q: Why is it necessary to have Bidding Categories?	Bids will be awarded by category.
Section 4.8 – Return Policy	We are a "made to order" manufacturer and cannot accept returns from Buyers for 30 days after delivery. Will this policy be removed from the bid? Otherwise, we are a large manufacture in NC and will not be able to comply.	
Section 4.12 Restocking Policy	We are a "made to order" manufacture and cannot accept returns unless product is defective. Will this policy be removed from the bid? Otherwise, we are a large manufacture in NC and will not be able to comply.	
Section 4.7 – Delivery	"if required, install, ready for owner's use. If requested in the purchase order, Buyer may request vendor to provide for boxing, set-up at user location and demonstration of the functionality of a product....Note: This is in direct conflict with what is stated in section 4.1. This is not how the office furniture industry normally operates.	The section will not be removed.

	Request this section be removed from the bid.	
Section 2.2, Duration of Contract, page 2 of 47	How many times can the contract be extended? What is the longest complete term of the contract all extensions included?	After the one-year renewal, the contract can only be extended with consent of all vendors.
Section 2.3, E-Procurement, page 2 of 47, paragraphs 18 & 19	Can you explain how the State will manage with the vendor, reconciling transaction fee discrepancies for any purchase orders canceled after fees have already been invoiced/accessed and paid? Please provide an example. Justification: Fees on PO's instead of actual shipments have been problematic in other states and have negatively impacted the pricing to the end user to cover that added cost.	Standard practice is to invoice vendor for the e-procurement transaction fee upon payment of the vendor's invoice for the goods purchased.
Section 4.1, Pricing on page 9 of 47	Can this statement, "Prices shall be expressed as a discount from the manufacturer's published retail price List (MSRP) for each product, product line or multiple products or product lines offered within a particular PRICING SUBMITTAL FORM" be revised to read "Prices shall be expressed as a discount from the manufacturer's published retail price List (MSRP) in effect at the time of IFB award for each product, product line or multiple products or product lines offered within a particular PRICING SUBMITTAL FORM"?	No.
Section 4.3 Order Channel and Payment Method on page 9 of 47.	Can the bid language be modified to allow vendors to include coverage of these added ProCard costs?	No. Additional fees added to payments made by procurement card will not be allowed.
Section 4.11 Return Policy & Section 4.12 Restocking Policy on pages 11 & 12 of 47	Can items 4.11 and 4.12 be identified as not applicable or exempted?	No.
Section 4.7 Delivery, pages 10 & 11, specifically regarding this	Question: Is this additional charge in addition to quoted installed pricing? Justification: Language state, "If so requested, Vendor shall be permitted to impose an additional charge for this service at a rate of \$15 for the first two items so requested, \$10 for the third to seventh items so requested and \$7 per item for any additional items, up to a maximum charge of \$126." This is important to clarify because furniture items	Yes.

	are unique in that some products can be more labor intensive to install than others (i.e. Casegoods versus chairs)	
4.1 Pricing, Page 9	Paragraph 1 states bid price shall "include all applicable charges for delivery, fully assembled and read for use." This indicates that vendor is responsible for installation. However this bid document does not allow for a separate charge for installation. Under GSA, there are specific SIN's that allow for service items e.g. installation, design services and project management. Can provision be added for this?	
4.7 Delivery, Out-of-stock, and Back-Orders, Page 10	Paragraph 2 - "...Vendor shall.....install, ready for owner's use." See comments/question in 4.1 above.	
Attachment A: Pricing Submittal Form,	Tier Pricing Schedule - Can modification be made to allow Vendor to Page 16 establish tier levels?	The discount tiers in Attachment A are modified to allow a vendor to set its own tier levels.
1.0 Intent, Use, Duration and Scope	Will vendors be able to submit filing and systems products on this bid? If not, will the future contract incorporate filing and systems in place of the existing contracts?	No. The State's needs concerning a term contract for filing and systems products will be determined at a later time.
1.0 Intent, Use, Duration and Scope	Vendor Recommendation: The IFB states the term of the contract is "an initial term of two (2) years, with one (1) one-year renewal options." The contract bid process is time consuming and costly for both the State and vendors, we recommend an initial term of two (2) years with three (3) one-year renewal options.	
2.4 IFB Schedule	The current IFB schedule only allows for 6 days from the point at which the state responds to all questions to when vendors' bids are due. This is insufficient time for vendors to prepare and complete a very thorough response to what is a fairly complex IFB, including processing through all of the questions and answers that will be coming back from the state. We ask that the state allow at least 3 weeks from the time that the answers to all vendor questions are provided by the state until the bids are due from vendors.	The deadline for submitting bids has been extended.
.11 Return Policy; 4.12 Restocking Policy	Because we offer a wide variety of fabrics, finishes, options etc. our products are made-to-order; we do not stock items. We recommend updating these sections to the following: Return shipments are not accepted unless specifically authorized by Vendor. Merchandise must be returned in original shipping cartons, with proper inner packing and is subject to inspection upon return before acceptance. All returns must	

	<p>be made within 30 days after Return Authorization is issued.</p> <p>Requests for returns due to reasons other than Vendor error, if accepted, are subject to a processing fee of up to 45% of the invoice amount and must be forwarded with the transportation charges prepaid.</p>	
Attachment A: Pricing Submittal Form	Can a vendor propose an alternative "Tier Pricing Schedule" to the one proposed by the State on the bottom of page 16 of the IFB.	The discount tiers in Attachment A are modified to allow a vendor to set its own tier levels.
Section 4.4, Page 9	Can you please provide another link to the standard template for line item catalog? This link is not working correctly.	The correct link is: http://www.ncpandc.gov/clogtemp.a.spx
Section 4.7, Page 10-11	This section notes information on delivery, out of stock, and back orders however I do not notice where installation is covered in this solicitation. Is installation available to be offered as a separate line item?	
Section 4.11, Page 11	This solicitation notes that merchandise returns by buyers for a period of thirty business days after delivery is acceptable, however our standard return policy is "No merchandise may be returned without written consent and shipping instructions. Special items are not returnable." All product manufactured is custom made to order.	
Section 4.12, Page 12	This solicitation notes that the vendor shall not impose a restocking fee on buyers, however our standard policy is "authorized returns are subject to a 25% restocking charge". All product manufactured is custom made to order.	
Section "B" of the submittal	Must the copy of the catalog & price lists for all products be printed? Or can we provide a link to pricing & include which page number each product is located? Our total price list would be over 200 pages so I am trying to determine which would be most logical for the State.	
Attachment I, Sec 18, page 40	To confirm, the entity receiving and invoicing the state pays the 1.75% Transaction Fee for E-Procurement?	The entity invoicing the State will be sent the invoice for payment of the e-procurement fee. The vendor awarded the contract, however, will be responsible for payment of the e-procurement fee if its authorized dealer defaults on payment.
Scope 1.0, last paragraph, page 1	Is there a possibility that Qualified Vendors for categories will be increased from a "generally 3-6" to an increased number to allow more interested manufacturers?	The 3-6 awards per category is a general guideline. The State reserves the right to make the number of awards per category as it deems provides the best value to

		the State in meeting its needs.
Section 3.3, Pg 8	Bid Evaluation Process- In reference to question #3. For all responses that pass the initial review process, the State will review and assess the Vendors' Attachment A: Pricing Submittal Form and Attachment C: Vendor Question Responses. Attachment C appears to be statements not questions that need to be answered. Please clarify.	The phrase "and ATTACHMENT C: VENDOR QUESTION RESPONSES." Will be deleted.
Section 4.4, Pg 9 Line Item Catalog	The State's standard template is posted on the Internet at the following address: http://www.ncpandc.gov/clotemp.htm . We were not able to access this template when will it be available? Or if awarded the contract will Supplier Manager provide this template after the award?	The correct link is: http://www.ncpandc.gov/clogtemp.a.spx
Section 4.5, Pg 10	If a Vendor specifies that all orders must be placed directly with the Vendor, can the Vendor still use Authorized Dealers? Does the Vendor still need to provide a list of Authorized Dealers? If the Vendor is awarded the contract do those dealers then also need to be registered as an e-Procurement Vendor even if the Vendor will be receiving the order directly?	A vendor may use authorized dealers to fulfill orders placed directly with the vendor. In that case, the vendor retains all responsibility for satisfactory performance under the contract. Only dealers authorized to send invoices or receive payment must be listed in a vendor's bid and be registered in the e-procurement system.
Section 4.7, Pg 10	The vendor is only allowed to add an additional charge for installation services of \$15.00 additional for the first two items, \$10 for the third to 7th so requested at \$ 7.00 per item etc. up to a maximum charge of \$ 126.00. This seems like an unreasonably small amount of money for a complicated installation- for example computer furniture. Is there an allowance for complicated installations such as computer furniture, which might require two men and a half hour to install? Please keep in mind almost all furniture is shipped KD-knocked down and either blanket wrapped or in cartons and this is done for safety reasons and to protect the furniture. This is a common industry practice. Not shipping the furniture assembled.	
Section 4.8, Pg 11	Does the vendor need to file a Quarterly Report if there have been No Sales or are we required to report No Sales as well?	Vendors are required to report even if there have been no sales during the period.
Section 4.11, Pg 11	Return Policy- Are the vendors required to accept merchandise within that 30 days, even if it has been made to order, such as a specified wood finish and	

	specific laminate color? If restocking fee is allowed for these custom items , then can the restocking fee be the cost of the item? Note -All our furniture is made to order, we do not stock furniture with exception of some chairs.	
	Systems furniture and Filing are not listed as being part of this bid. Can you clarify if they will be added, and if not, when those items anticipate going out to bid?	The State's needs concerning a term contract for filing and systems products will be determined at a later time.
	Will the state consider a restocking fee for returned items	
	Will the state consider increasing the dollar amount for projects having to go out to bid	This solicitation does not contain any dollar amount above which purchases must be competitively bid.
	Will state agencies still be allowed to use default contracts like TCPN, US Communities and ENI?	No.
Section 4.1 Pricing, Page 9 of 47	We want to be able to provide the best possible pricing and discounts to our dealers and State Agencies. How are we to submit our current MSRP List pricing with this IFB when we now have to include freight, installation and setup in our List price. We have not introduced a price increase on our contract items since 2009 and 2011 in anticipation of the new IFB. Do you expect us to hold 5 year old List pricing and still reduce the thin margins by including freight, installation, and the 1.75% eProcurement fee or will you allow us to submit new pricing that is fair to the State, Dealer, and Manufacturer?	
Section 4.12 Restocking Policy, Page 12 of 47	Do you expect us, as a North Carolina manufacturer to allow for a 30 day return policy without imposing any kind of restocking fee and not limit the order sizes to a maximum allowable dollar amount? If a State buyer purchased 200 computer tables from us, this would be manufactured to order and would require excessive warehouse space and expenses to put an order like this back into inventory. Are you open to alternative plans for Returns and Restocking Fees?	
Re: 4.19 ELECTRONIC COPY OF PROPOSED CATALOG page # 13	We have furnished others with a PDF file of our complete catalog and price list. I believe that is a quite common practice. Would it be acceptable rather than a spreadsheet format?	The State requires a standard MS Excel format for purposes of its evaluation process.
TIER PRICING	Are tier discounts required? If so how	Tier discounts are not required.

SCHEDULE	much consideration is given to them in awarding the contract?	
	I cannot find anywhere in the bid document that is looking for bids based on historical weighted average per category like in the past. Is this not part of the GS 143-57.1.1? It has always been our understanding that anything over \$50,000 dollars would have to go out for bid, yet this seems to be asking for a tier in discount and the first tier starts after \$49,999. We are just not clear how we are to proceed without a tabulation page showing the items we should be pricing.	
	Another concern we have is the return policy. Our manufacturer does not take returns unless they charge a restocking fee. Also, returns are on a case by case basis and at the manufacturers discretion. We offer so many colors, styles and sizes for each item and these are not stock items. I would say that 90% of what we sell is made to order. With that said, once the order gets in to the manufacturing process we are not allowed to make changes or cancel the order without paying restocking fees. The same is true with seating as each chair is made to order with the customers fabric selection. We ask that this portion of the bid be revisited.	
	Minimum orders in the amount of 50.00 that we are required to deliver and install is simply impossible. We would be willing to offer a larger discount for items that are small that could be drop shipped or sent UPS direct to the end user.	The minimum order amount is amended to \$250.
Section 4.11, Page 9	Why only a delivered and installed discount? Why not give the users the option of a delivered only discount?	
Section 4.20, Page 13	Catalog and price books are different items. Also by not having all of a manufactures product on QPL it sounds as if you are requesting a special catalog, Is the State requesting a special catalog?	Section 4.20 does not require a vendor to supply a special catalog at the request of a buyer.
	Are you going to allow import manufacturers to apply for contracts. If the answer is no, how can the imported products be legally sold to the state?	There is no restriction on bidding imported products or on bidding by foreign manufacturers.

<p>IFB Section 3.3 – Page 8 – Bid Evaluation Process:</p>	<p>Please explain what is meant by second sentence in Point 2: “the State reserves the right to waive any minor informality or technicality in bids received.”</p>	<p>Generally, a minor informality or technicality is one that is merely a matter of form rather than substance or pertains to some immaterial defect in a bid or variation of a bid from the exact requirements of the solicitation that can be corrected or waived without prejudice to other bids.</p>
<p>IFB Section 3.3 – Page 8 – Bid Evaluation Process:</p>	<p>Point 4 – (similar to Section 3.2 question above) – states that bids will be evaluated primarily on pricing discounts and the resulting net. Awarding on price can be very challenging when a variety of styles and qualities are being evaluated. There is a statement that consideration of quality will influence the decision – by what criteria? Suitability for intended use – how will you know what the client needs when the requirements vary from agency to agency, from year to year? Previous experience of the vendor – how can this be evaluated if a new company is applying to be on the contract?</p>	
<p>IFB Section 4.1 – Page 9 – Pricing:</p>	<p>Please consider that including delivery and installation for all orders can inflate your pricing overall. Manufacturers and dealers have to consider the costs involved for “worst case” scenarios and make sure that their pricing covers these occasions. For instance – a user may need just one chair but the closest dealer is 100 miles away – typically speaking, the delivery and installation could easily cost more than the profit for the sale of the chair, unless the discounts are inflated to account for this. Likewise, there is no consideration for installation in non-standard work hours or conditions. Allowing vendors to provide discounts for product only will afford the State much more competitive pricing. With services being quoted separately, users will get better service. The fees for delivery would be negotiable but the State could establish guidelines to give their users direction on what is customary.</p>	
<p>IFB Section 4.2 – Page 9 – Minimum Orders:</p>	<p>The minimum order of \$50 is too low. Outside of a service part, very little furniture could be purchased for \$50. Please consider raising this to \$1,000.</p>	<p>The minimum order amount is amended to \$250.</p>
<p>IFB Section 4.4 – Page 9 – Line Item</p>	<p>Please consider providing at least 15 business days for development of the</p>	

Catalog:	electronic catalog. This task could be overwhelming for a manufacturer with a lot of product on the contract or even a small vendor with little product.	
IFB Section 4.7 – Page 10 – Delivery, Out of Stock and Back Orders:	<p>The first paragraph talks about “delivery to a loading dock” and “installation if required” yet earlier in the contract it is stated that installation is required. Although we prefer to price as Delivered only, the bid is not clear about what our pricing should cover.</p> <p>Charges are called out for labor for “additional items” – What is an item? A chair, a modular top to a desk, a file bar? All of these could conceivably be packaged in individual cartons and be construed as an item. This is more reason to quote installation, when required, separately.</p> <p>Our order cancellation process requires that changes or cancellations in orders be approved and are subject to charges based on the stage of the order at time of cancellation due to our product lines being “made to order” type products. Would you accept our standard cancellation policy as shown below?</p> <p>“A confirmed order may not be changed or cancelled, in whole or in part, without prior written consent. Expenses incurred because of the changes shall be charged to the Purchaser. In the event of cancellations, Purchaser will be liable for reasonable cancellation charges. Changes may affect delivery dates.”</p>	
IFB Section 4.20 – Page 13 – Physical Catalog:	Would you consider electronic catalogs as an option? Vendors are printing less and less literature. Websites are interactive and provide current and more in depth information than printed literature.	If a vendor does not offer physical catalogs or similar descriptive information to its prospective buyers, then an electronic copy is acceptable.
IFB Section 5.2 – Page 14 – Certification and Safety Labels:	This section requires that furniture meet OSHA requirements. OSHA does not provide guidelines or oversee furniture performance standards. As stated earlier, this is the work of ANSI/BIFMA. Comply with State and Federal requirements relating to clean air and water pollution – do you mean “Indoor Air Quality”. Please cite a standard that you	Each cited standard is required to be met if the standard is applicable to the product offered.

	want the furniture to meet.	
Reference 4.7- Delivery	<p>Can the service rate scheduled be reviewed based on quantity and requirement of the state agency?</p> <p>The service charge as listed in the document is not flexible enough for the state to be able to utilize an authorized dealer for all furniture installation. Where a simple guest chair for an office may be able to carry this type of rating, more complicated installations (dorm rooms, executive casegood offices, etc) will carry a different rate. It would be beneficial for the state to utilize E-procurement and adding the additional procurement of D&I suggestion as listed above as a tool to approve and monitor the true cost for installing furniture. If larger spend opportunities arise, it would also be beneficial to use the E Procurement tool as a comparison against the bidders on the RFP, with all the cost associated with the project in one central location.</p>	
Reference 4.8- Reporting.	Reporting Sales and Pricing- clarification needed if the reporting is based off of booked purchase orders with the vendor, or invoiced purchase orders with the vendor.	Sales are to be reported separately for delivered orders and orders entered but not yet completed.
Attachment I- Number 18- Electronic Procurement Usage and Fees-	The Transaction fee for E Procurement is an administrative fee, much like other states E-Procurement fees. Can this be passed along to the state agency on the invoice? How do you anticipate handling an administrative fee for orders that do not come through E-Procurement? Are there any other administrative fees the state will levy on a quarterly basis to assist in the funding of this portion of P&C?	E-procurement fees shall not be passed on to agencies on the invoice. The e-procurement fee will be assessed on e-procurement orders, only. All vendors are required to register in the e-procurement system, and a vendor shall not discourage use or refuse orders entered through the State's e-procurement system. Currently, no other administrative fees are assessed.
Attachment I: Number 22- Pricing Adjustment	<p>How do we add new product to the contract within the term of the contract?</p> <p>Pricing Adjustment is noted in this attachment ,however, we do not see a similar clause for adding or deleting product from the contract within the 2 year term if awarded. As product comes into the market, and product is dropped ,</p>	

	the state should have the ability to manipulate the product offering within the product categories accordingly.	
Section 2.5	Do we submit multiple pricing submittal forms (Section A) and only one of the other sections (B thru K)	Correct.
Section 4.1	Can additional discounting be offered for a certain project and if so will that volume discount remain in effect for the duration of the project?	Yes.
Section 4.1	Without allowing for some type of install charge for orders that would require them, vendors will be forced to offer less discounting to cover their cost for all projects. Can reasonable install charges be allowed by the State?	
Section 4.5	If a manufacturer is bidding this contract can a dealer also bid the manufacturer's product?	More than one vendor may bid the same product, as long as a vendor is qualified to bid the product under that particular bidding method.
Section 4.11	Is it possible to disallow returns as the majority of our business is project based and very customized?	
	Why vendors located within North Carolina are receiving an unfair advantage of bidding on all GSA approved products, while vendors located outside of NC can only include products approved via the QPL process?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
3.3, Pg 8	How does the State plan to make a price comparison between manufacturers if the specs for one of the above methods is more restrictive than the other?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
Attachment A, pg 16 of 47	Will tiered discounts have custom tier options rather than state specified levels?	
	Will steel cantilevered shelving (library) be included in the new contract? Metal cabinets and wooden bookcases are included in the contract, and Attachment K invites Folding Chairs and Tables. Adding steel cantilevered shelving will bring NC contract up to par with SC and other states.	No.
4.1, pg 9 of 47	Will contract discounts contain a line item for installation and delivery?	
	If a manufacturer is accepted on the contract, will vendors/dealers have access to sell the product at contract pricing rather than going through the manufacturer	

	direct?	
4.11, pg 11 of 47	"Vendor shall accept merchandise return...." How does this apply to custom sales?	
Attachment A, Page 16	Is tier pricing in addition to the single discount offered for a line item or is it one or the other? For instance, if we offered 50% off as our base discount, is the tier pricing based on an additional percentage discount such as 1% for that volume or are we to list 51% as the correct format. Additionally, is the tier Pricing volumes to be interpreted as list or net?	
Section 3.3.4, Page 8	Can you provide weight to each of the evaluation factors noted in this section: Discount from List, Net Price within a bidding category, quality of the product, overall completeness and breadth of line offered, previous experience, suitability for intended use, delivery terms and warranty terms. In addition, can you please provide more detail on what features or attributes are consider as "quality" and 'breadth of product line'.	The factors are listed in descending order of importance.
Section 4.10, Page 11	We respectfully request the language be modified to repair or replace defective items.	
Pricing Submittal Form, Page 16	Are the pricing tiers set or can we propose other tiers; such as tier one, dock delivery, tier two delivered and set in place, tier three delivered and installed?	The pricing tiers refer to quantity discounts.
Attachment "A" : Bidding Categories	There is no listing for Fixed Seating. Do you plan on adding this category within the current solicitation?	No.
Section A/Attachment A, page 16	On the pricing submittal form, the box labeled Bidder, what information is the State requiring for this space? Bidder name & address?	Correct.
Section C/attachment B Vendor information, page 18	Does the State require bidder to list out IFB Section A/Attachment A, page 16 every distribution point or will listing fourteen show adequate State coverage?	
Section I/attachment I, page 40	Can the State clarify when the 1.75% transaction fee is applied to this contract? Is it only when PO is placed through e-procurement service? When was this implemented by the State?	The e-procurement fee applies to all orders placed through the e-procurement system. This fee was implemented in 2001.
SPECIFICATIONS	states any deviation from specifications must be pointed out in "Attachment B Deviations From Requirements and	Paragraph 8 is Attachment H is deleted.

	Specifications.” The attachment B that I have downloaded consists of pages 17-20 does not note anything about deviations from the specifications. It is specifically for Vendor Information. Are there additional pages that are missing?	
RECIPROCAL PREFERENCE	North Carolina discourages other states favoring their own residents by applying percentage increases to any bid submitted a North Carolina resident vendor, yet this IFB has North Carolina favoring it’s own residents by allowing only resident bidders that hold a GSA schedule to participate. How can the State logically explain the difference between these two situations?	Both requirements are statutory.
References Attachment C	Vendor Question Responses and the Attachment C that I downloaded with the bid packet is named “North Carolina General Statutes 143-57.1 – Furniture requirements contracts.” We did not find an attachment called “Vendor Question Responses” in the bid packet. Please confirm this was unintentionally omitted and there is another document?	The phrase “and ATTACHMENT C: VENDOR QUESTION RESPONSES.” Will be deleted.
RETURN POLICY	<p>The mfg environment is not as it once was. There are significant efforts to reduce inventory and overhead and also maintain and shorter lead-times, while providing users as many options as possible therefore most of our product is made to order. For these reasons, we do not have the warehousing space that we once had to accommodate a return just because someone has changed their mind. If the State is willing to revise this return policy, you will likely appreciate more competitive discounts than leaving it as is. If there is no revision to this section, vendors will likely have to consider in their discounts that returns will be donated to charity, discarded, etc. Will you consider revising it, something similar to this?</p> <p>Return Requirements: Ordering entity shall coordinate returns with the Contractor. Upon notification by the ordering entity of a duplicate shipment, over-shipment or shipment in poor condition, the products must be promptly removed at the contractor and/or dealer’s expense. Ordering entities reserve the right to return products for defects in material and/or workmanship. In the event of product return, the ordering entity reserves the</p>	

	right to accept either a full refund for the returned product or a replacement of the product.	
Attachment B Page #19	Do all Authorized Dealers need to be listed on page 19 of 47 in the bid package or will a separate list work? We were advised all Dealers need to have a Federal Tax ID number listed and there isn't a place for that on the form provided. Or do we not need to include the Federal Tax ID Number?	A separate list of Authorized Dealers may be attached after page 19 of the bid. All Authorized Dealers must register with the e-procurement system in order to receive orders, and the Federal Tax ID will be requested at that time.
Section 4.0 Page #9	The "Online Catalog Info for Marketing.pdf" file gives a website template: http://www.ncpandc.gov/clogtemp.p.htm but it will not open. Is there a different link to get the website info?	The correct link is: http://www.ncpandc.gov/clogtemp.aspx
Pricing Submittal Form Page #16	Is there any way the volume tier price ranges can be more evenly broken out such as \$1 - \$99,999, \$100K - \$199,999, \$200K - \$299,999 & \$300K+	The discount tiers in Attachment A are modified to allow a vendor to set its own tier levels.
Attachment A	Is there any consideration for adding systems furniture or frame and tile segmented systems furniture?	Not in this solicitation. The State's needs concerning a term contract for other furniture products will be determined at a later time.
Bid Qualification IFB pg 19 of 47	Will there be a limit on how many authorized dealers will be allowed on the contract? In regards to the dealer listing, can we submit the dealer contact information on an excel spreadsheet or are we required to use the form included in the bid docs only? For dealerships that have multiple locations, do we need to include each location as a separate dealer?	There is no limit to the number of authorized dealers. The list must be submitted in both hard copy and electronic formats, along with the remainder of the bid.
Bid Qualification IFB Attachment I, pg 37 & 38 of 47	It says "Any applicable taxes shall be invoiced as a separate item" so does this mean there is a sales tax imposed to the State Agency under the NS State contract?	No; however, some non-state government entities will be eligible to use this contract.
Bid Qualification IFB Attachment K, pg 44 - 46	If we are only filling out the request for occasional tables category, do we only include the last page pg 46? The page break should be revised as the header is on page 45. Do we need to fill out one page for each of our different occasional table series?	
3.3, Pg 8	How does the State plan to make a price comparison between manufacturers if the specs for one of the above methods is more restrictive than the other?	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.
4.7	If services are not separated, is this section intended to imply a dealer may only charge \$126 for an entire facility of	The allowable charges and rates have been revised. See amended Section 4.1 PRICING, amended

	furniture? Can you please provide additional clarity as to how this number was contrived?	section 4.6 TRANSPORTATION FOR DELIVERY, and amended section 4.7 DELIVERY, OUT-OF-STOCK, AND BACK-ORDERS.
4.11	Can this policy be amended or removed? This is not a realistic request in the market of contract office furniture that is ordered with custom finishes and materials.	
Reference 4.7-Delivery	Can the service rate scheduled be reviewed based on quantity and requirement of the state agency?	The allowable charges and rates have been revised. See amended Section 4.1 PRICING, amended section 4.6 TRANSPORTATION FOR DELIVERY, and amended section 4.7 DELIVERY, OUT-OF-STOCK, AND BACK-ORDERS.
Reference 4.11-Return Policy.	Most product is custom to the state in the commercial furniture industry, and is not available to sell to the commercial market when returned- as the industry allows the clients to customize based on fabric and finish selection. Request review as it pertains to returns to strike from the IFB,	Section 4.11 RETURN POLICY will not be deleted.
Attachment I- Number 18- Electronic Procurement Usage and Fees-	The Transaction fee for E Procurement is an administrative fee, much like other states E-Procurement fees. Can this be passed along to the state agency on the invoice? How do you anticipate handling an administrative fee for orders that do not come through E-Procurement? Are there any other administrative fees the state will levy on a quarterly basis to assist in the funding of this portion of P&C?	The e-procurement transaction fee cannot be passed along to agencies as an invoice item. This fee is applicable to e-procurement orders only, and no other administrative fee is assessed.
Attachment I: Number 22- Pricing Adjustment	How do we add new product to the contract within the term of the contract? Pricing Adjustment is noted in this attachment ,however, we do not see a similar clause for adding or deleting product from the contract within the 2 year term if awarded. As product comes into the market, and product is dropped , the state should have the ability to manipulate the product offering within the product categories accordingly.	
IFB Section 1 – Page 1 – Evaluation criteria for qualified bidders:	Two methods have been established, in the current IFB, to allow vendors to submit their products for consideration. The methods have completely different evaluation criteria. The NC manufacturers who hold a GSA schedule are one category, while manufacturers outside NC must be on the QPL. This clearly sets	Existing QPLs have been suspended. See answer to question #1.

	different evaluation methods for similar products based solely on the location of the manufacturer.	
IFB Section 4.7 – Page 10 – Delivery, Out of Stock and Back Orders:	<p>The first paragraph talks about “delivery to a loading dock” and “installation if required” yet earlier in the contract it is stated that installation is required. Although we prefer to price as Delivered only, the bid is not clear about what our pricing should cover.</p> <p>Charges are called out for labor for “additional items” – What is an item? A chair, a modular top to a desk, a file bar? All of these could conceivably be packaged in individual cartons and be construed as an item. This is more reason to quote installation, when required, separately.</p> <p>Our order cancellation process requires that changes or cancellations in orders be approved and are subject to charges based on the stage of the order at time of cancellation due to our product lines being “made to order” type products.</p>	
IFB Section 4.13 – Page 12 –Sales Promotions:	Please double check the last sentence, looks like the word “not” should be removed.	The word “not” in the last sentence is deleted.
IFB Section 4.19 – Page 13 – Electronic Copy of Proposed Catalogs:	Will you accept the catalogs in an interactive pdf format?	The State requires a standard MS Excel format for purposes of its evaluation process.
Section 4.11, Page 9	Why only a delivered and installed discount? Why not give the users the option of a delivered only discount?	
	I cannot find anywhere in the bid document that is looking for bids based on historical weighted average per category like in the past. Is this not part of the GS 143-57.1.1? It has always been our understanding that anything over \$50,000 dollars would have to go out for bid, yet this seems to be asking for a tier in discount and the first tier starts after \$49,999. We are just not clear how we are to proceed without a tabulation page showing the items we should be pricing.	
	Our manufacturer does not take returns unless they charge a restocking fee. Also, returns are on a case by case basis and at the manufacturers discretion. We offer so	A restocking fee may be charged for a custom item if the buyer is provided written notice of the fee at the time of ordering. This notice

	many colors, styles and sizes for each item and these are not stock items. We ask that this portion of the bid be revisited.	may be provided as part of the item description listed in the electronic catalog. See Section 4.12 RESTOCKING POLICY; see also Section 4.4 LINE ITEM CATALOG.
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