Listed below are vendor questions that were received prior to the requested deadline and the corresponding answers for RFB# AA17-RH-5159 – Travel Arrangements to the Rose Bowl Parade per the following specifications or approved equal.

**The University will be answering all vendor questions in their entirety on Wednesday, January 18, 2017.**

The original bid opening date was scheduled for January 19, 2017 @ 1:00 pm EDT

To give vendors ample time to complete their bid responses after receiving answers to these questions the Bid Opening Date has been REVISED to: Tuesday, January 24, 2017 @ 1:00 EDT.

**Question #1: Can the bid be mailed in or does it have to be done by Bid Express?**

**Answer #1:** Per the terms and conditions set forth in the RFB, all bid responses are to be submitted electronically directly to Bid Express. Here is a copy of the information regarding Bid Express for easy reference.

**Introducing Bid Express**

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is accepting electronic bids via [www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com) website. All bidders must first register on the bidexpress.com website and create an Info Tech Digital ID. Registration and Digital ID creation are free.

It can take up to five (5) business days to process your Digital ID and it is highly recommended that a Digital ID be enabled 48 hours in advance of submitting an electronic bid.

**Please plan accordingly.**

Exceptions to submitting thru Bid Express will only be made in extenuating circumstances as deemed appropriate by the Director of Procurement and Campus Services, John O. Martin (413-545-0361 or via e-Mail: procurement@umass.edu).

Note that failure of the vendor to allow enough time to register, get a digital I.D. or meet other required steps will NOT be considered as an extenuating circumstance.

A fee of $25 will be incurred for those who wish to bid electronically on a pay-per solicitation basis; alternatively, you may subscribe for $50 per month to have access to bid on all solicitations and email notifications. [Learn more in this vendor overview](https://bidexpress.com)

For additional guidance, please contact the Bid Express team at toll free (888) 352-2439 (select option 1) or at support@bidexpress.com

**Question #2:** I would like to make a general statement concerning the length of the trip. Reference Section 1.2.2 – Travel Dates – A standard Rose Parade experience usually features five (5) nights (28Dec to 2Jan) allowing for the inclusion of many unique venues across Southern California. A three night / four-day program will afford the band with an equally enjoyable opportunity to experience Pasadena and Los Angeles area at the Pasadena Rose Parade.

**Answer #2:**

On the recent inspection tour of the 2017 Tournament of Roses Parade, we were informed that all bands are required to be in Southern California by no later than Dec. 28, 2017.
Therefore, all bids should now reflect a travel itinerary of departure from Massachusetts early AM Dec. 28th, with arrival into Southern California that same day, and return to Massachusetts the evening/night of January 1st, following the Tournament of Roses Parade.

Question #3: Reference Section 1.2.4 – Air Carrier Services / Charter Plane Flights – Will it be acceptable to estimate the airfare for commercial air services in light of previous years’ experience since the current prices and schedules from these air carriers is not made available until 3334 days prior to the “return” travel date? Charter air pricing is not subject to the same rules and will be available.

Answer #3:
It will be acceptable to consider both chair air carrier and commercial air travel possibilities. We are looking for the best, most economical solution for transporting our party to Southern California. If commercial air fare is more economical, then that will be considered.

Question #4: Reference Section 1.2.6 – Other Transportation – Groups of your size customarily utilize a semi-tractor trailer 53’. The use of the semi allows the band to load and ship band equipment of all sizes and luggage (reducing checked baggage fees on the commercial air carriers). The use of a cross-country semi or shipper also reduces damage to valuable musical instruments and equipment. In addition, the expenses associated with Items A, B or C will be reduced or eliminated if the Semi is used.

PLEASE ADVISE IF THE BAND WILL CONSIDER USING A SEMI FOR TRANSPORT.

While we could consider adding this as a feature to the Rose Parade bid, in our experience your group will receive a lower cost and better service from the shipper/trucker when negotiating with shipping and trucking vendors in your local community.

Answer #4:
In the past, the Minuteman Marching Band has traveled with renting 20 foot box trucks for transporting instruments/equipment. Because of the BandFest performance, we will need to transport our front ensemble instruments and our sound amplification equipment. We have a team of drivers, who can drive box trucks from Amherst to Southern California and back. Another option is the hiring of a semi-tractor trailer to transport from Amherst to California, at which point, box trucks could be rented for transportation while on site. A bid can compare the most economical options for transportation of instruments/equipment from campus to California and back, whether that be a semi-tractor trailer, rental box trucks, or a combination of both.

Question #5: Reference Section 1.2.8 – Meal Options – We would ask for clarification on Item B subset 4. Is it the intention for us to include three (3) dinners 12/29; 12/30 and 12/31?

Answer #5:
Yes. Including dinner options for those nights, as well please include a dinner option for 12/28/17.
Question #6: Reference Section 1.2.8 – Meal Options – We would ask for clarification on Item D – is this in addition to the included meals? Is the goal to have the option to bring in extra food during the rehearsal(s)?

Answer #6:
What the Minuteman Marching Band has done in the past on trips (and for on-campus football games) is to bring a boxed lunch (typically sandwiches, chips, apples, drinks) to distribute after practice. We would be looking to do this, instead of going to a restaurant/cafeteria.

Question #7: Reference Section 1.2.8 – Meal Options – We would ask for clarification on Item E – if dinners are include on all evenings, what is the need or goal for providing meal options and prices for sit-down dinners if all three (3) are already included? On a group or individual basis? Is the goal to identify dining venues within walking distance of the hotels offered?

Answer #7:
What the Minuteman Marching Band has done in the past on trips (and for on-campus football games) is to bring a boxed lunch (typically sandwiches, chips, apples, drinks) to distribute after practice. We would be looking to do this, instead of going to a restaurant/cafeteria.

Question #8: Reference Section 1.2.10 – Events – If the pricing model for the band is to include all services, how are these events different than the Band Itinerary? Is the goal to offer some options on 12/30 or 12/31 around the Band’s main scheduled activities?

Answer #8:
What the Minuteman Marching Band has done in the past on trips (and for on-campus football games) is to bring a boxed lunch (typically sandwiches, chips, apples, drinks) to distribute after practice. We would be looking to do this, instead of going to a restaurant/cafeteria.

Question #9: Reference Section 1.2.10 - Events – Item 5 – performances at Disneyland or Universal would customarily involve the entire group. Are we free to choose either venue or is one preferred? Are we to include the admission to the venue? If attendance at Disneyland or Universal is to be included, please indicate if meal vouchers for lunch and/or dinner are to be included and at what value?

Answer #9:
Please include in your bid response options, so that we can choose the venue that best appeals to the University. We would like to see the price involved for attendance at either park. Meal vouchers for lunch and dinner should be included in the cost. Value of $8.00 for lunch and $12.00 for dinner.

Question #10: Reference Section 1.2.12 – Taxes, Gratuities and Parking Fees – in reference to “hotel staff” does this refer to front office staff, banquet staff and room maids? While tipping of room maids is often left to the individual traveler it would be our suggestion that we (the tour operator) be instructed to include this expense to offer an appropriate reflection to the room cleaning maids of the respect UMass has for their service. Please advise.

Answer #10:
Gratuities for room cleaning should be included in the estimate.
Question #11: Reference Section 1.2.13 – Tour Escorts – is staffing at the “designated airport” mean departure in the Massachusetts area airports as well as the Los Angeles airport arrivals? If so, will this staff also be needed at the Massachusetts airports on the return?

Answer #11:
We should have at least one tour escort on campus (or at the Massachusetts-area airport), to over-see that everything is going according to plan with the flight out. Additional tour escort can meet the travel party upon arrival in Southern California.

Question #12: Reference Part II – Terms and Conditions – Section 2.2 – Payment – last paragraph – A travel experience of this size usually has incremental prepayments for accommodations, transportation, venue admission, meals and airfares. All of these vendors will require prepayment before the trip. How will this be handled in light of the bolded last sentence about payments being made in arrears?

Answer #12:
Please specify in your bid response what your company’s proposed payment schedule will be. Be as detailed as possible with benchmark dates and proposed payment(s).

Question #13: Under 1.3 Contract for Services the University requests the successful vendor to sign the standard University Contract for Services. We have been unable to find the Contract for Services on http://www.umass.edu/procurement. We would appreciate it if you could email us a copy of the University Contract for Services.

Answer #13: If you are unable to access the Contract for Services-Long Form by using the hyperlink in the bid document, you can also access this form by:

- Go to: www.umass.edu/procurement (this will bring you to the UMass Amherst Procurement Home Page)
- In the Left Hand Column – Lay your cursor over the fifth item from the top – “Forms”
- In the drop box – click on “Purchasing”
- Click on “Contract for Services – Long Form” – Rev 8-2016