

# Request for Quote: Researcher/Writer, Women Artists Biography Project

## INTRODUCTION

The Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) is dedicated to collecting, understanding, and sharing American art. As the nation's first collection of American art, SAAM offers an unparalleled record of the American experience. The collection captures the aspirations, character, and imagination of the American people throughout three centuries. The museum is the home to one of the largest and most inclusive collections of American art in the world. Its artworks reveal key aspects of America's rich artistic and cultural history from the colonial period to today.

The museum has been a leader in identifying and collecting significant aspects of American visual culture, including photography, African American art, and Latinx art. The museum has important collections of works by folk and self-taught artists, New Deal art, contemporary craft, paintings and sculpture, and time-based media arts. In recent years, the museum has focused on strengthening and diversifying its collection through acquisitions, awards, curatorial appointments, endowments, by commissioning new artworks, and through public programs, scholarly publications, and a rich array of interpretive material.

This Request for Quote (RFQ) is issued by the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Smithsonian Institution (SI), for technical professional, non-personal services to provide The Contractor shall provide up to 2,000 hours of professional, technical, non-personal research and writing services to create textual biographical summaries for the Smithsonian American Art Museum's website, AmericanArt.si.edu.

## SUBMITTING YOUR QUOTE:

Price quotes must be submitted by email. **Quotes are due by 5 p.m. EST, on Friday, April 28, 2023 to SnyderS@si.edu.**

## SCOPE OF WORK

The Contractor shall provide up to 2,000 hours of professional, technical, non-personal research and writing services to create textual biographical summaries for the Smithsonian American Art Museum's website, AmericanArt.si.edu.

The contractor will work in a team-based environment to assist museum personnel with tasks in support of enhancing the museum's digital collections information and assets. The goal of the project is to illuminate the stories of women artists in SAAM's permanent collection and reach our target online audiences through searchable biographical summaries.

## STATEMENT OF WORK

The Contractor will assist and work closely with museum personnel in person and/or remotely to research and write biographical summaries related to women artists in the collection.

Specific work tasks include the following:

1. Research artist biographies and document that research through a bibliography (list of works consulted/cited) according to the museum's guidance and protocols
2. Write first draft biographical summaries and circulate them for review, editing, and fact-checking

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3. Participate in the review, editing, and approvals process in collaboration with museum staff and other contractors
4. Prepare the final draft biographical summaries and prepare the textual assets for entry into website via online forms
5. Attend all relevant museum and team meetings that facilitate project communication, progress, or directly affect the contractor's work as identified by the designated Technical Point of Contact (TPOC) and approved by the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR)

### **DELIVERABLES**

Contractor will follow the museum's guidance and protocols and work with museum staff to research, write, and review a minimum of—but not limited to— 30 fully researched biographical summaries which will focus primarily, though not exclusively, on American women artists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in SAAM's collection, with the final list of artists to be chosen by the museum. The contractor may be assigned to review, audit, revise, or make recommendations for revision of previously published online biographical summaries, based on whether they meet museum standards for accuracy and tone. Biographies numbering more than 30 will be identified, researched, and completed as remaining contract hours allow after the initial 30 have been accepted.

Contractor will deliver bi-weekly written reports that summarize the work performed in support of the primary goals in the SOW (Statement of Work). In cases where a task has its own deliverable, that will be attached to the bi-weekly report. Reports are submitted to the designated TPOC and COTR.

The biographical summaries will conform to established guidelines set out by the museum, including:

- Concisely describe and contextualize each artist's importance or significance, so that visitors without subject matter expertise might understand why their work is held at the Smithsonian American Art Museum
- Highlight any significant mediums, subjects, or themes seen in each artist's work, and aspects of their careers that relate to what is held in SAAM's collection
- Use straightforward language and avoid jargon, to be comprehensible and accessible to those without subject matter expertise
- Share some sense of the personality, voice, or character of the artist by including direct quotes from the artist, if available
- Encourage further exploration of the artworks themselves as well as other related content
- Aim for an evergreen, "encyclopedic" style to minimize the need for frequent updates
- Be written to around 200-400 words, depending on available sources
- Be licensed as freely as possible under the Smithsonian's terms of use and open access policies, to encourage reuse and sharing
- Be thoroughly researched, fact-checked, and edited, for release into open platforms ensuring that the information contained within is accurate, reliable, and meets with Smithsonian standards for accuracy and quality over time

All Subject Data first produced, composed, or created in the performance of this contract shall be considered "work made for hire" as that term is defined under the Copyright Act. The copyright to such Subject Data shall be the exclusive property of Smithsonian and may be registered by the Smithsonian Institution in its own name.

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## CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS

The following is required to complete this work:

1. Experience bringing advanced-level knowledge of American art to bear on professional or academic research and writing
2. Proficiency in researching museum collections information and individuals across histories, particularly women's biographies
3. Ability to effectively access and utilize research library resources and materials and identify relevant and reliable primary and secondary sources
4. Demonstrated ability to write clearly, concisely, and with accuracy for a general audience
5. Familiarity with using current discourse and framings from contemporary art history, critical race art history, Indigenous studies, visual culture, and feminism to conduct and present research
6. Experience working successfully as part of a team
7. M.A. in a relevant field such as Art History, History, Visual Culture, or Cultural Studies with a focus on American art, or equivalent professional experience, preferred

## EVALUATION

The Smithsonian plans to award based on best value to the museum considering the following factors. The Smithsonian plans to award without discussions, however, does reserve the right to conduct discussions if later determined by the Contracting Officer to be necessary.

All of the following factors are of equal importance. Evaluation factors are:

1. Relevant Experience/Past Performance
  - a. Include contractor's résumé or CV which demonstrates relevant academic or paid work experience obtained within the past 10 years providing or performing research and writing services of similar subject matter, scope, and complexity that indicate the contractor's suitability for this project.
  - b. Past Performance should be indicated by a list of current or previous contracts or employment with names of points of contact and their current telephone numbers who can answer specific questions on quality, workmanship, and scheduling. Provide contract periods of performance dates, dollar value, and brief description of the work performed.
  - c. If appropriate previous contract or employer information is not available, please provide contact information (name, relationship, email, telephone) for 2 professional references.
2. Qualifications and Technical Competence
  - a. Technical Information – Include in the quote a narrative discussion addressing the contractor's technical competence, capabilities, qualifications, and approach to satisfying the requirements of the SOW.
  - b. Product Examples – Two original research and writing samples should be delivered with the quote and will not be accepted after the time specified for the receipt of quotes.
  - c. Price

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## **WORK LOCATION**

Work shall take place primarily remotely, online, using digital collaboration tools. The final daily and weekly schedule will be determined and confirmed by mutual agreement between the COTR and the Contractor. The Contractor shall meet SAAM's standards and follow all templates provided for biographical summary content production. Research travel scheduling and costs, if it is determined they are required, will be determined, and confirmed by mutual agreement between COTR and the Contractor.

## **EQUIPMENT**

The Contractor must supply and maintain their own personal computer, either Mac or PC. The computer must be equipped with a video camera, microphone, antivirus software, and be connected to a reliable high-speed Internet connection with a speed of at least 25 Mbps.

## **CONTRACT PRICE**

The price to the Smithsonian Institution for this purchase order is a not-to-exceed price of \$80,000. The Contractor shall work approximately 2,000 hours at a fixed hourly rate of \$40/hour. This price includes all costs; any changes to the not-to-exceed price will be made by written modification of this purchase order by the Contracting Officer.

## **SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT**

It is a requirement that current and prospective recipients of contracts and purchase orders awarded by the SI must complete registration in SAM and maintain an active record in SAM throughout the period the SI award is in effect. The SAM requires a one-time business registration, with annual updates, and allows vendors to control the accuracy of the business information they enter. The financial data you enter, which includes the electronic funds transfer (EFT) data collected by SAM, will assist the SI with correctly directing payments on your invoices and complying with the Federal Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996.

Within thirty (30) calendar days after your SAM registration is activated you must mail a notarized letter to SAM. You will receive guidance on this procedure throughout the SAM registration process and again after your SAM registration is activated. Federal agencies, including SI, has been assured that once an entity's SAM registration is activated, agencies may engage that entity. Notarized letters from registered entities will need to contain specific language. OCon&PPM has provided the preferred language for letters with our form memo OCon 120 – Mandatory Registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) that accompanies this RFQ.

If yours is the acceptable price quote and you are selected for award, your organization's active registration with SAM must be verifiable by SI staff managing this procurement prior to contract or purchase order award being executed, and at the time any modifications or amendments to awards might be required.

You may complete or update your SAM registration information anytime online at <http://sam.gov>. Questions regarding the process may be directed to the Federal Service Desk online at [www.fsd.gov](http://www.fsd.gov) or via toll free call to 1-888-606-8220. There is no charge for registering in SAM.

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## **UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER (UEI) NUMBER**

A UEI number is a unique twelve-digit alpha-numeric identifier that will be assigned to you when your SAM registration is completed. A UEI is available for each physical location of your business (see Section V. of this RFQ). You will need to maintain your assigned UEI(s) in a safe location where they may be easily accessed. Your UEI will be required whenever you need to annually update your SAM registration or make changes to your SAM registration information at any time.

## **BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS**

If a contractor employee assigned to the SI under this contract will have an association with SI that will be greater than thirty (30) days, determined either at time of contract award or anytime during contract performance, and will need access to staff-only areas of SI controlled facilities and leased spaces, the employee shall be required to receive an SI Credential. Contractor employees who require an SI Credential shall be required to undergo and pass an appropriate background investigation and complete security awareness training before an SI Credential is issued. Employees whose associations with the SI will be less than 30 days shall not receive a background investigation or SI Credential, however, they must be escorted by Credentialed personnel at all times when in staff-only areas of SI facilities. If relevant to this RFQ, a form OCon 520, Background Investigations and Credentials for Contractors' Personnel, is included. The following actions shall be required to be completed by the SI Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) and successful vendor:

The COTR shall provide an OF-306, Declaration for Federal Employment form, for each of the Contractor's employees who will be assigned to the SI for 30 days or longer. The OF-306 forms must be completed by each person and returned by the Contractor to the COTR, or other designated SI employee, within ten (10) workdays from receipt of the forms by the Contractor.

For contractors to SI organizations outside the Washington DC and New York City areas, forms SF-87, Fingerprint Cards, shall be provided to the Contractor by the COTR or other designated SI employee. Each form SF-87 must be returned to the COTR, or other designated SI employee, within ten (10) workdays from receipt of the forms by the Contractor. When necessary, the forms SF-87 shall be submitted by the Contractor with the OF-306.

## **INFORMATION TO BE SUBMITTED WITH QUOTES**

Quotes submitted must include the following information to be deemed responsive to this Request for Quote and accepted by the SI:

- A. Project Title
- B. Contractor/business name, address, telephone number, and UEI number (if applicable)
- C. Point of contact name, telephone number and email address
- D. Pricing. Hourly rate preferred.
- E. Past Performance information should include the contact person with telephone number and other relevant information for at least 3 recent relevant projects/contracts for the same or similar goods and/or services.

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- F. Résumé or CV of contractor that will be performing work under the anticipated award
- G. Cite the date through which pricing submitted is valid.

## **ATTACHMENTS TO RFQ**

SI 147-A – PO Terms and Conditions

SI 147-B – Privacy & Security Clause

Smithsonian Independent Contractor Clauses

OCon 120, Mandatory Registration in the System for Award Management (SAM)