



Hot School Meals Tender Evaluation

Department of Social Welfare, Department of
Education and Youth and SPU

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Disclaimer



The departments of Social Protection and Education and Youth, together with the Schools Procurement Unit advise Schools, that this presentation sets out recommendations on how a school may carry out an evaluation. It is not an instruction on how to carry out an evaluation as each School is a separate Contracting Authority which must adhere to and follow Public Procurement Legislation and follow instructions as set out in the relevant CFT.

Agenda



- Setting up your evaluation team
- Conducting your evaluation
- During / Post Standstill Period - Signing of Contract
- Questions answered
- DSP funding

Set up your Evaluation Team



Recommended Evaluation Team set up:

Name	Organisation	Role
	Member of the Board of Mgmt. / Principal	Chair
	Member of the Board of Mgmt. / Principal / Teacher / Member of the parents' association	Evaluator
	Member of the Board of Mgmt. / Principal / Teacher / Member of the parents' association	Evaluator
	Member of the Board of Mgmt. / Teacher / Member of the parents' association	Note taker to the Evaluation Team

- ✓ The Evaluation Team is responsible for the selection of the supplier to the school.
- ✓ All Evaluators have an equal voice during the evaluation.

The Evaluation Team



1. Prior to Tender closing date all members must complete Conflict of Interest form and submit to the Chair
 - ✓ The **Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Declaration** is available on the SPU website
 - ✓ If a conflict of interest is declared at this point or when the tenderers are made known to the Team, a decision needs to be taken by the Chair to either exclude the person from the evaluation team or to allow them to participate.
2. Confidentiality throughout the process by all the evaluation team members is critical to the process
All members must :
 - ✓ maintain the confidentiality of the information/documents they receive;
 - ✓ keep all documents in a safe and secure place;
 - ✓ not discuss anything about this process to anyone outside of the Team.

Any breaches of confidentiality must be brought to the attention of the Chair.

Role of the Chair



- The Chair on the Evaluation Team is responsible for the following:
 1. Setting up the Evaluation Team
 2. Ensuring each member has submitted their **Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Declaration**
 3. Ensuring the evaluation is carried out correctly and adheres to the principals of public procurement:
Equal treatment, proportionality and transparency
 4. Ensuring the Team evaluates the Tenderer's response only and in line with the evaluation methodology published in the CFT i.e. what was looked for in the CFT
- The Chair must be very familiar with the contents of the CFT
- **The Chair normally doesn't score unless consensus cannot be reached on an award criteria**

Role of the Evaluator



The Evaluator is responsible for the following:

1. Submitting their **Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Declaration**
 - ✓ should they identify a conflict of interest at any stage in the process they must inform the chair
2. Familiarity with the content of the CFT
3. Adhering to the principals of public procurement: **Equal treatment, proportionality and transparency**
4. Evaluating the Tenderer's response only in line with the evaluation methodology published in the CFT only i.e. what was looked for in the CFT
5. **Reading tender responses and scoring each one in advance of meeting with the evaluation team**
6. Positively working with the Team in reaching a consensus score for each tenderer
7. Signing the evaluation report

Role of the Note Taker



The note taker on the Evaluation Team will record the following:

1. Whether a Tender is compliant or if not why
2. The Teams' consensus scores for each Tenderer's response to each award criteria
3. Brief note on the rationale for the consensus scores achieved by each Tenderer.
 - This note will help the Team when notifying unsuccessful tenderers and provide at a high level information that will help that tenderer should they wish to participate in future tenders.
4. Drafting of evaluation report
5. Drafting of outcome letters to Tenderers

Compliance Checks



Tenderers **must be eliminated** should any of the following not be submitted:

- TRD
- Site visit has not taken place by the Tenderer
- MR01 - signed declaration
- 3 previous contract examples
- Response to each award criteria in section 6
- CV of proposed Key Account Manager (KAM) and nominated backup KAM

Compliance Checks



- On completing compliance checks if any of the following is missing or the level of detail required not provided, follow up with the Tenderers on eTenders with **clarification questions**
 - Declaration of no conflicts of interest on Tenderers letter head
 - 3 previous years financial statements which must include an unqualified audit report
 - Copy of acknowledgement of FBO notification letter or copy of approval certificate from the competent authority
 - Tenderer's Statement on Tenderer's letterhead and signed
 - Client references
 - Some TRD tick boxes are blank
- If the response to the clarification questions are deemed by the Team not to have met the requirement the Tenderer may be eliminated.

Conducting your Evaluation



- ✓ No grade structure, all are equal
- ✓ Leave any contractor bias/favouritism at the door
- ✓ Evaluators should stand their ground if they think others are attempting to over influence
- ✓ Only give marks where they are merited and can be stood over
- ✓ Only score the material submitted/asked for in the tender responses
- ✓ Consensus must be reached

Assessment of Selection Criteria



The Evaluation team need to confirm that the following meets the requirements as set out in the CFT

1. 3 previous contract examples

- ✓ Hot food contracts
- ✓ Average number of meals delivered per day over the term of the contract example $\geq 60\%$ of the number of hot meals required in your school's procurement;
- ✓ Contract value $\geq 60\%$ of your school's contract value
- ✓ The client references confirm the above

2. Registered/applied to register as an FBO

3. Assess the financial statement to confirm the turnover is $\geq$ to what your school set out in Table 1 of the CFT

4. Where a company's turnover is less than €12m, they do not require to have their financial statements audited.

Qualitative assessment of Award Criteria



Tenderer's response to each award criteria will:

- a) in the first instance be assigned a scoring band (see next slide)
- b) assigned a score within that scoring band marks range

Scores will be awarded on the basis of consensus i.e. all must agree

Note as per CFT, the pass mark for each award criteria is 70%. Where a Tenderer's response achieves <70% in any award criteria, they fail and are to be eliminated.



Scoring Methodology	
Percentage Weighting Range	Characteristic of Response
91- 100%	Excellent to Exceptional The Tenderer's proposal is assessed as demonstrating an excellent to exceptional level of quality and understanding in respect of the qualitative criterion.
80- 90%	Good to Very Good The Tenderer's proposal is assessed as demonstrating a good to very good level of quality and understanding in respect of the qualitative criterion.
70- 79%	Satisfactory to Very Satisfactory The Tenderer's proposal is assessed as demonstrating a satisfactory to very satisfactory level of quality and understanding in respect of the qualitative criterion.
30- 69%	Unsatisfactory or Inadequate The Tenderer's proposal is assessed as unsatisfactory or inadequate in that it is lacking in some degree of quality and understanding in respect of the qualitative criterion.
1- 29%	Very Unsatisfactory or Very Inadequate The Tenderer's proposal is assessed as very unsatisfactory or very inadequate in that it is lacking to a significant degree in quality and understanding in respect of the qualitative criterion.
0	No response.

Example: Sub-criterion A.1. A food ordering system which has a maximum available mark of 70 (where a tenderers mark must at least score 49 marks not to be eliminated)

Step 1 Agree % band range e.g. 70-79%

Step 2 Agree % within the range e.g. 75%

Step 3 Calculate 75% of 70 (available marks)

Step 4 52.5 is the mark recorded for the tenderer for that award criteria

Note taker's recording

Use text from table to help draft the narrative e.g. using the 75% example above :

The Evaluation team accessed the Tenderer's response as demonstrating a very satisfactory level of quality and understanding in respect of the qualitative criterion in

The narrative should be no more 3-5 lines for each award criteria for each tenderer.

Identify the Winner & Next Steps



- Once marks have been awarded for each award criteria the overall marks should be calculated for each tenderer.
- The tenderer with the highest marks is identified as the successful tenderer.
- The Evaluation team will draft and sign off on the evaluation report. A report template will be available on SPU for your use.
- The report should be stored by the school with all documents related to the competition.
- Draft and issue competition outcome notifications for each of the tenderers. Templates will be available on the SPU website for your use.
- The Standstill period commences the day after the outcome notifications have been issued. (min 10 day <750 and 14 days >750).

Note confidentiality still remains critical to the process.

During the Standstill Period



- The successful tender will provide the following to you:
 - Insurance certs
 - Tax clearance certificate/ tax access numbers
- Upon receipt, the school will need to validate these
- The successful tenderer will also provide key personnel contact details

After the Standstill Period



- School to complete:
 - Contract - all information except for school signatures
 - Data Processor Agreement (DPA) - all information except for school signatures
- Schools procuring Service Delivery Models 2, 3 or 4 complete:
 - **Relevant Licence + Deed of Renunciation**
- School to issue contract, DPA, and if required, Licence + Deed of Renunciation to the successful Tenderer for signing
- Upon receipt of signed documentation, the school should counter sign and issue a copy to the provider and file a copy for their record and to performance manage the provider for the duration of the contract
- Schools to complete the competition on eTenders

Questions



Q1: Two responded to our tender, one said they need to carry out works, the other doesn't - what do we do?

The school should review both responses and establish as to what is the extent and scope of the works proposed by the responder that has identified that works are required. They should then consider if these works appear appropriate and required based on the room layout chosen. The school may also separately and independently request clarification from the supplier that identified no works are required and ask them to reconfirm their position to demonstrate how compliance with food safety law and building regulations can be adhered to.

Q2 Nobody responded to our tender – what should we do?

Contact DSP.

Questions



Q3: We only received one response. What do we do?

The school must evaluate the tender response to ensure it passes all the award criteria set out in the CFT. If the TRD meets the requirements, you can award the contract to them.

Q4: If I wish to change the service delivery model on my published tender, do I need to put it up on eTenders again?

Yes, you will need to cancel your current published tender and publish a new tender with your preferred option.

Questions



Q5: When facilitating the site visits, potential tenderers have indicated that our preferred service delivery option is not viable due to the size of our school building, but they would be able to deliver other service delivery options. Is this allowed under the current published tender, or do we need to retender?

You will need to cancel your current published tender and publish a new tender with your preferred option.

Q6: If retendering, do we need to wait until the current published tender timelines expire?

No. you do not need to wait until your current tender timeline expires.

Questions



Q7: Can tenderers submit tender responses after the cut off date?

No, eTenders does not facilitate late responses. Under no circumstances should schools accept tender responses (for tenders >€50k) outside of eTenders. As per public procurement rules, contracting authorities must treat all tenderers equally, giving them all the same amount of time to submit their response.

What do Schools joining The School Meals Programme for the 1st time need to do now?



- Please complete and sign the SMLPS1b form in full.

What you need:

- Separate bank account that will be used only for school meals.
- Submit the signed SLA with DSP.

If you have already submitted an application for the 2025/26 academic year

- If you had already applied for a cold lunch from the beginning of September (while conducting your HSM procurement):
 - *complete pages 3 and 4 of the SMLPS 1B form again and a revised decision on funding will be made.*
- For any queries email School.Meals@welfare.ie

What do Existing Schools need to do now?



- Schools should apply for funding for Hot School Meals as soon as procurement is completed and a supplier is chosen.
- Existing schools should ensure that they have submitted their SMLPS 1a and their income & expenditure return (SMLPS2 form).
- For any queries email School.Meals@welfare.ie