

THE INTER FAITH NETWORK FOR THE UK

PROCUREMENT POLICY

1 Context and general principles

1.1 This document provides the framework for the procurement of goods and services by the Inter Faith Network for the UK (IFN). It is designed to ensure:

- Value for money.
- Competition – where the cost is above a certain level, multiple quotes or tenders will be sought unless there are strong reasons otherwise.
- Payment on time - suppliers should be paid on time in accordance with contractual arrangements.
- Ethical and legal aspects - contracts must be in writing and be fair and non-discriminatory.
- Transparency – keeping all documents and recording decisions in such a way as to ensure that the process can be seen to be fair and transparent.
- Environmental impact - suppliers should be requested to demonstrate that they are aware of environmental impacts and that in their product and services they aim to minimise adverse effects.

1.2 Where there is external funding; relevant wording of the funding agreement(s) will apply. NB that grants and donations can only be accepted where these are consistent with IFN's policy on acceptance of donations.

1.3 Value for money considerations can include an appropriate mix of quality, cost, resource use, reputation, warranty/guarantees, and timeliness.

1.4 A preferred supplier may be approached directly where the service required is:
(a) highly specialist and a potential alternative supplier cannot be identified; or
(b) is highly commercially confidential; or
(c) relies on knowledge from a previous collaboration with one particular supplier.

1.5 A previously commissioned service (within a period of 12 months) with a supplier may be extended to carry out a related but distinct piece of work without needing to re-procure.

1.6 This policy sets out below the procedures which must be followed before awarding a contract when its value exceeds certain thresholds.

2 Summary of contract thresholds

2.1 The values set out in Table 1 below are given based on the size of IFN's budget and the nature of its financial commitments.

Table 1

VALUE	NORMAL MINIMUM	APPROVAL
£500 - £2,499	One written quotation	Executive Director

£2,500 - £9,999	Two written quotation	Executive Director and Hon Treasurer
£10,000 - £14,999	Three written quotations	Executive Director and FGPS
£15,000 - £24,999	2 tenders required, invitation to which to be published online	Executive Director and FGPS
£25,000 +	3 tenders required, invitation to which to be published online	Board approval

3 Definitions

- 3.1 A 'quotation is a fixed price offer, in response to a request for services or goods.
- 3.2 A 'tender' is a response to an invitation to offer a particular service or combination of goods and services which sets out what is required and how the supplier might meet the requirements specified.
- 3.3 The procedures relating to seeking a quotation and seeking a tender differ, and are set out below.

4 Procurement procedures

Quotations

4.1 Process for obtaining quotations

- i) Specify the product or service in the light of experience and/or research.
- ii) Include a description of the product or service required and of date by which completion of the service or delivery of the product is required.
- iii) Identify potential suppliers using previous suppliers and any other sources including local knowledge and recommendations.
- iv) Request quotations from a shortlist of potential suppliers.
- v) Evaluate quotations on the basis of the specification.
- vi) Select supplier based on cost, quality and other pertinent value for money issues identified at 1.3.

Tenders

4.2 Tender process (£15,000 or above)

- i) Agree specification for the service or product and the requirements of the supplier including quality issues.
- ii) Include information about:
 - a. the work/outputs required;
 - b. timetable;
 - c. quality;
 - d. any details of expectation of the approach to be taken;

- iii) Tender invitations may be sent by IFN to specific suppliers in addition to being placed on the website as noted above.
- iv) Depending on the level of cost, tenders may also be advertised through the IFN e-Bulletin or in any other location, allowing a minimum of three weeks for responses (where practicable).
- v) Ensure the advertisement gives clear information about how to apply.
- vi) Send out the specification to interested parties with full information of how to submit a tender.
- vii) While final approval decisions on awarding contracts will be carried out by those specified in the table at 2.1 above, the initial evaluation of tenders may be carried out as follows:
 - a. Where the tender is for services or products costing under £15,000, evaluation of responses may be done by staff (a minimum of two, including one senior staff member), with consultation as necessary with the Chair of the FGPS.
 - b. Where the amount is £15,000 or above submitted tenders will be evaluated by a staff member and a trustee (normally a member of the FGPS); for tenders for work at a cost of £25,000 or above, three people will evaluate, including the Chair of the FGPS or the Honorary Treasurer.
- viii) Where the amount is £15,000 or above, there should be shortlisting and the shortlisted suppliers should be invited for interview/presentation.
- ix) Where interviews are required, there should be at least two people on the Interview Panel, one of whom should be a Trustee.
- x) Carry out proportionate due diligence checks on suppliers.
- xi) Award to supplier, issuing a contract which has been checked by a legal advisor where necessary.

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