

Roger Williams University Competitive Bidding Policy

Purchasing Department, March 2024

I. Policy Statement

The Purchasing Department staff, as agents of the University, are responsible for the procurement of materials, equipment, and services across the University. The procurement process involves researching and negotiating with vendors to acquire goods and services at the best competitive pricing, while considering quality, suitability, and service. Good business practice and the responsibility for the expenditure of University funds require the University to follow a policy for obtaining competitive bids/quotations.

This policy on competitive bids provides guidance to ensure that the University maintains a competitive sourcing environment. The policy calls for obtaining competitive bids based on prices and

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II. Scope

The scope of this policy includes Undergraduate, Graduate School, School of Law, and University College purchases, as well as purchases of goods and services intended for leased properties (e.g., One Empire Plaza, the Clay Studio (26 Burnside St.), the Senior Studio (87 Gooding Ave.), and any other properties that may be acquired or leased after this policy takes effect.

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discretion of the AVP of Facilities & Capital Projects in conjunction with the Director of Purchasing as to whether the involvement of Purchasing is appropriate for any particular project.

Prior to making purchases over \$100,000, the Purchasing Department must determine whether: a) an appropriate contract exists and under which the product/service can be purchased, or b) the product/service can be grouped with another transaction to realize additional cost savings.

Prior to soliciting bids, the requesting department must contact the Purchasing Department to initiate the process. The first step will be a meeting with all internal stakeholders to discuss the department's requirements. The requestor will provide the Purchasing Department with all relevant information regarding the required goods/services, timing, budget, and suggested vendors. The Purchasing Department will collaborate with the requestor to create the RFP.

It is required that at least three suitable vendors receive an RFP. If less than three vendors receive the RFP, the rationale shall be provided.

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B. No-bid

A no-bid purchase is one where multiple vendors exist, however, there is a compelling reason to use a specific vendor, consultant, or manufacturer without going out to bid. The circumstances under which a no-bid procurement may be authorized include:

1. An emergency purchase necessary to protect the safety of RWU personnel or students, or to protect existing property from immediate damage or loss. Such emergency sole source procurement decisions will be made only at the discretion of the applicable department or division Vice President.
2. An urgent need to maintain or restore University operations. Examples include issues resulting from inclement weather, breakdown of HVAC equipment, power outages, etc.

C. Existing Contracts

Bids are not required for purchases that are made as part of an existing contract. The OGC contract number under which the goods or services are being purchased should be referenced in the Purchase Requisition. The Purchasing Department can assist requestors in identifying contract numbers.

D. IT Purchases

It is recognized that IT projects can have multiple technical considerations in relation to obtaining bids from multiple vendors. The follow areas are specified:

1. VAR (Value Added Resellers): It is inherent in VAR sourcing that we are getting the lowest possible pricing from the manufacturers with whom our vendor holds the VAR relationship. As such, multiple bids are not required from VARs for products that are made by the specific manufacturer with whom they hold theaam

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3. Each ID/IQ vendor must execute a master agreement contract, the terms and conditions of which are incorporated by reference into each purchase order awarded under the ID/IQ agreement.
4. The cost for task orders assigned under the ID/IQ agreement will be based on the competitively bid schedule of fees included in the ID/IQ proposals and subsequent contract.
5. The intent of the ID/IQ agreement is to streamline procurement and standardize contracts, however, when possible the department making the purchase under the ID/IQ will solicit bid proposals from two or more ID/IQ contract holders, prior to issuing the purchase order.

Some examples of projects that are appropriate for the use of ID/IQ's include bathroom renovations, renovation of a building envelope, repairs to a parking garage, sports field improvements, and furniture replacements. ID/IQ's are not for major capital projects. The determination of whether or not the use of an ID/IQ is appropriate lies with the Project Director.

VII. Additional Information

To ensure objectivity and eliminate unfair competitive advantage, suppliers (i.e., vendors) who participate in the preliminary planning or development or drafting of specifications, requirements, requests for quotes or proposals must be informed in writing prior to such assistance that the information they develop will be shared with all potential bidders, and that they will be required to submit a full proposal for the goods or services and be subject to the same selection and award criteria as others submitting proposals.

To avoid potential conflicts of interest, no employee, officer, or agent of the College should participate in the selection, award, or administration of purchases or contracts in which, to his or her knowledge, the employee, immediate family, or partner has a financial interest in the supplier's organization.

Bids and quotes submitted to the University must be held in strictest confidence and under no circumstances should suppliers be given information about bids or quotes, or pricing obtained from competitive sources.

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