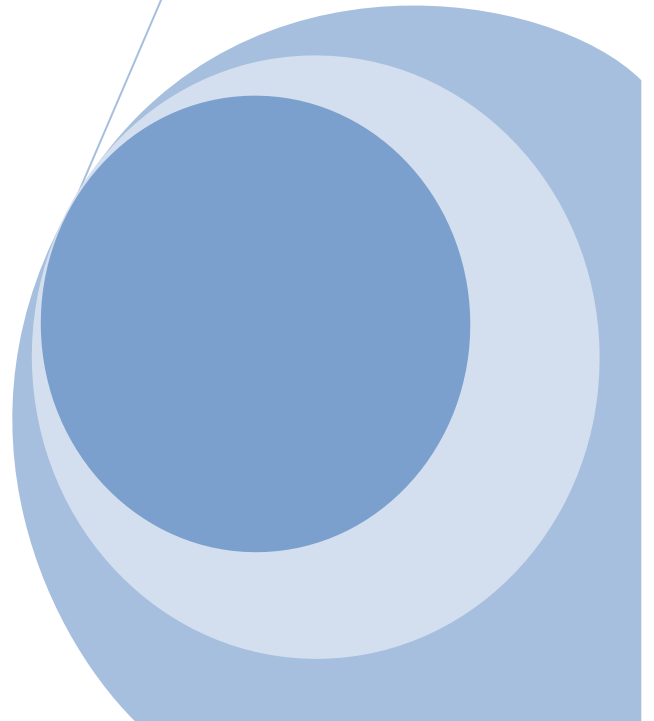
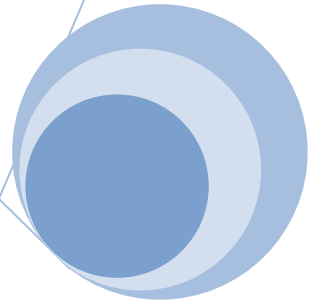


**Student Transportation
Services: RFS Evaluation
Training Guide**



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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this information is to provide guidelines for individuals evaluating and scoring the Submissions received in response to the RFS process for Student Transportation Services.

Copies of the RFS and any issued addenda will be provided to each evaluator for review.

This is a training package that supplements the RFS Procurement Guide and RFS Evaluation Matrix.

SECTION 2: EVALUATION TEAM AND PARTICIPANTS

The evaluation team is responsible for evaluating and scoring Submissions in accordance with the evaluation process and requirements set out in the RFS document, resulting in recommendations for contract award.

2.1 Facilitators

PPI will facilitate the evaluation. Their responsibilities are to:

- Facilitate the consensus meetings.
- Ensure complete documentation of the score and the rationale for the score is created.
- Ensure an open, consistent and fair evaluation process is followed.
- Participate in vendor debriefing meetings.

2.2 Evaluation Team Lead

The evaluation Team Lead for the RFS evaluation is > **insert name**. The Team Lead's responsibilities are to coordinate the evaluation activities, including:

- Managing all evaluation documentation.
- Logging issues.
- Requesting support to clarify, or to advise on an issue.
- Coordinating the clarification question process with the Qualified Suppliers.
- Scheduling meetings.
- Reviewing and confirming scoring results of each evaluator.
- Tabulating final scoring results.

2.3 Mandatory Submission Requirements and Pricing Evaluators

The Team Lead will conduct the evaluation of the mandatory response requirements (i.e. Form of Offer and Pricing Evaluation Form) and pricing evaluation.

2.4 Fairness

In the event that the Consortium has engaged the services of a Fairness Commissioner to oversee the procurement processes, the fairness responsibilities are:

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- Review all procurement documentation.
- Oversee consensus meetings.
- Ensure evaluators followed a consistent and fair evaluation process and that that evaluation process applied is the process described in the RFS.
- Address any fairness issues, such as conflict of interest, consistency of scoring, etc.
- Ensure that no Qualified Supplier receives preferential treatment.
- Check results.
- Attest to the fact that the evaluation team followed a fair evaluation process.
- Confirm selection.
- Provide a fairness report on the process.
- Attend debrief meetings, if requested.

2.5 Evaluators

The RFS will be evaluated by:

> insert names

It is suggested that the RFS Evaluation Team have sufficient representation amongst the Consortium's participating School Boards to support the outcome of the evaluation process. It is suggested that at least one representative from each School Board is an evaluation team member.

Evaluators must commit to the full evaluation of all Submissions to which they are assigned. Their responsibilities are to conduct the evaluation of the responses to the Quality Criteria, participate in consensus meetings, and form recommendations for contract award.

SECTION 3: GENERAL EVALUATION GUIDELINES

3.1 Guiding Principles

The following guidelines lead to the selection of the most appropriate outcome and ensure the integrity and fairness of the evaluation process.

- No conflict of interest shall exist for any evaluation team member, for example - (1) part ownership in any company submitting an offer, (2) family members working for or having part ownership in any company submitting an offer, and/or (3) any other reason why a member of the evaluation team cannot give an impartial evaluation. Any evaluation team member who may have a real or perceived conflict of interest should contact the Fairness Commissioner for guidance.
- Evaluation team members must agree that their sole objective is to participate in the recommendation of the Qualified Supplier whose Submission is determined to be the most appropriate, taking into consideration the evaluation factors set out in the RFS.

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- Each evaluator will conduct and complete an individual and impartial evaluation of each Submission submitted using the evaluation matrix provided.
- All Submissions and evaluation material must remain secured at all times and will be the responsibility of the evaluator while in their possession. All notes will be restricted to the evaluation matrix provided.
- The RFS clearly states the basis upon which a Qualified Supplier will be selected, and the evaluator will score according to the information submitted in response to the RFS only.
- The Consortium reserves the right to seek clarification and supplementary information relating to the clarification from Qualified Suppliers after the Submission deadline. The response received from a Qualified Supplier shall, if accepted, form an integral part of that Qualified Supplier's Submission. The Consortium reserves the right to interview any or all Qualified Suppliers to obtain information about or clarification of their Submissions. In the event that the Consortium receives information at any stage of the evaluation process, which results in earlier information provided by the Qualified Supplier being deemed to be inaccurate, incomplete or misleading, the Consortium reserves the right to revisit the Qualified Supplier's compliance with the mandatory requirements and adjust the scoring of responses to the Quality Criteria accordingly.
- All information contained in Submissions, or pertaining to the selection process, is confidential. Evaluation team members may not under any circumstances release information which is pertinent to the evaluation process to Qualified Suppliers or other outside parties (including project personnel not involved in the evaluation) such as RFS status, Submissions (e.g., number or identity of Qualified Suppliers, etc.), discussions, negotiations and award of contract with prospective suppliers. During the period between the receipt of Submissions and the notification that an award has been made, all evaluation team members ensure that:
 - Details of the evaluation activities are not made known, wholly or in part, to anyone other than authorized evaluation team members.
 - Information is not provided to any individual Qualified Supplier.
 - There is no discussion of any aspect of the evaluation activities outside the evaluation team.
 - There is no reproduction of any part of a Qualified Supplier's Submission without the explicit permission of the evaluation team lead.
 - All waste paper containing Submissions is destroyed or securely disposed of at the conclusion of the evaluation process.
- During consensus meetings, the evaluation team will discuss any individual differences as best as possible, which may include requests for additional information. The resulting discussions or additional information will be used to bring consensus and a final ranking of the Submissions will be prepared.

- Evaluation team members will be strictly prohibited from participating in individual meetings or any other direct contact with Qualified Suppliers regarding the RFS during the evaluation process, unless otherwise assigned or directed to do so.
- During the evaluation process and while meetings are in session, the evaluation team shall maintain confidentiality. No member shall transmit, communicate, or otherwise convey preliminary conclusions or results of what was proposed by the Qualified Suppliers, or that a particular Submission will be selected. All internal workings of the evaluation team shall be kept confidential until the evaluation team has completed its evaluation and the recommendation to the Consortium is approved and the contracts are signed.
- The evaluation process will be consistently applied to all Submissions to ensure that all evaluation results are well documented and defensible.
- Qualified Suppliers may ask for a debriefing as to why they did not win. They will be provided an explanation of the results of the Submission evaluation without comparisons to other Submissions.

3.2 Code of Conduct

All participants in the evaluation process must sign and submit a copy of the attached Code of Conduct (Appendix A) to the evaluation team lead prior to starting their evaluations.

SECTION 4: EVALUATION OVERVIEW

4.1 Evaluation Process

Step 1 – Evaluation Orientation

Evaluators are encouraged to review all documentation related to the RFS and the evaluation prior to beginning the evaluation process.

Step 2 – Mandatory Requirements Evaluation

Each Submission is reviewed for mandatory requirements compliance. Any Submission that does not comply with all of the mandatory requirements may be disqualified.

Step 3 – Quality Criteria Evaluation

Evaluators will be provided with copies of all qualifying Submissions to evaluate as set out in the RFS. Submission are evaluated and scored in accordance with the written response to each Quality Criteria submitted in the Submissions, subject to clarification and reference checks.

Individual Reviews

Each evaluator should evaluate Submissions in a different order to remove any potential bias associated with the order of evaluation. This order will be prescribed by the Team Lead.

It is estimated that each Submission will take approximately 2 hours to read and mark. The first Submission normally takes longer. The evaluation team should agree to a schedule for completion and commit to meeting this schedule in order not to delay the process.

Consider, that during this time, questions may arise that will have to be sent to Qualified Suppliers for clarification; this may result in delays completing the evaluation. Sufficient time should be included in the schedule for clarification questions to be formulated, sent and responded to by Qualified Suppliers.

The evaluators shall evaluate the Submission according to assigned sequence in the table below (insert more columns or rows as necessary):

Evaluator	Submission	Submission	Submission	Submission	Submission
>Insert Evaluator 1	1	2	3	4	5
>Insert Evaluator 2	2	3	4	5	1
>Insert Evaluator 3	3	4	5	1	2
>Insert Evaluator 4	4	5	1	2	3

Step 4 – Consensus Meetings

Evaluation scores are summarized and presented at the consensus meetings. When the scores are notably different, the evaluation team reviews and determines the cause of the discrepancy. If a single consensus score cannot be agreed upon, an average score will be calculated and used. If an evaluator changes their score, the change should be noted (and initialed) on their original Evaluation Matrix accordingly. The reason why a Quality Criteria has not received maximum points will be recorded into a Master Evaluation Matrix and will create an audit trail of the evaluation team’s decisions.

The consensus meeting is scheduled for >insert date.

Step 5 - Tabulation of Scores

Scores will be totalled for each Qualified Supplier. Submissions that have passed the required threshold will be evaluated further.

Step 6 – Pricing

The Pricing Evaluation Form will be opened and scored, as set out in the RFS, for only those Qualified Suppliers that have successfully passed the mandatory requirements and Quality Criteria threshold.

Step 7 – Selection

Scores from the Quality Criteria and pricing will be totalled, and the highest scoring Qualified Supplier(s) will be selected.

4.2 Submission Control and Distribution

The evaluation team lead is responsible for ensuring the original Submissions are kept confidential. Each Submission copy is assigned a copy number. A log will be maintained of who has which copy of the Submissions.

All Submissions and evaluation material are to be kept confidential and physically secured at all times and will be the responsibility of the evaluator while in their possession. All notes and materials must be returned to the team lead once the evaluation is complete including individual notes and consensus meeting notes.

Submissions and Evaluation Matrices must be returned to the evaluation team lead by **>insert time and date.**

SECTION 5: EVALUATION OF QUALITY CRITERIA

5.1 Submission Format

The Qualified Supplier's responses to the Quality Criteria will be evaluated on the extent to which they meet or exceed the requirements outlined in the RFS. Responses to Quality Criteria should provide detail and should reference any attached substantiating documentation, including its specific location in the Submission. Submissions that do not respond to specific Quality Criteria will receive a zero-point score for that item.

5.2 Evaluation Principles

The following process issues are raised for the evaluation team to review:

- Evaluators should only score information provided in a Submission according to the page limits prescribed to each Quality Criteria.

No outside information regarding a Submission or Qualified Supplier may be permitted.

- A statement in the RFS may have been ambiguous, causing one or more Qualified Suppliers to misinterpret the intent of the RFS clause or requirement.

If the requirement could have been ambiguous, the evaluators should alert the evaluation team lead and complete their individual evaluations.

- Knowledge of the Pricing Evaluation Form prior to completing all the stages in the Quality Criteria evaluation may impact an evaluator's ability to score objectively.

Pricing information will not be disclosed to any member of the evaluation team until the evaluation of Quality Criteria and all consensus meetings are complete.

5.3 Instructions to Evaluation Team Members

- Submissions are evaluated on an individual basis in the first instance. Evaluators should not discuss their individual evaluations, such as concerns with potential non-compliance issues, etc. with other members of the evaluation team as this could influence evaluations prior to the consensus process.
- Any clarifications required should be brought to the attention of the evaluation team lead who will log the concern and bring it forward to the appropriate support team for resolution.
- Evaluate each Submission in the sequence assigned to you.
- The scoring of a Submission must be done in a consistent manner, based solely on the information provided in the Submission under consideration. Do not compare Submissions.
- Evaluators should be careful to only evaluate content and not style (for example, spelling errors should be disregarded). Presentation styles will vary from expensive glossy to straightforward letter Submissions; but content is the key.
- Before scoring a Submission, it is important that you have an understanding of the overall approach the Qualified Supplier used to design its response. Therefore, thoroughly familiarize yourself with the structure of the Submission before starting to score. Each evaluator must review all relevant pages of the RFS to become familiar with the complete scope of what is being requested of the Qualified Suppliers.
- **Use the Evaluation Matrix provided; examine and evaluate each Quality Criteria, then record a score and appropriate comments/rationale to substantiate your score; for example, listing the relevant factors found in the response or noting where information has been located if not obvious. This information is invaluable during the consensus meeting. The need to write down the rationale for assigning scores cannot be overemphasized; as otherwise, you may not recall the details when asked to defend your scoring during the consensus meeting. Supporting comments will also assist in responding to Qualified Supplier inquiries, debriefing requests, audits and legal challenges. Also, in the comments section note any information presented in the Submission that may require verification or due diligence and present these items to the evaluation team during the consensus session.**
- Do not tabulate the total score for a Qualified Supplier, as this may influence the evaluation of other Submissions. The total quality score for each Submission will be calculated only after the consensus meeting has been completed.
- If there is a non-compliant issue surrounding an item in the Submission, you should note the issue and continue scoring the Submission. At the first opportunity, you should alert the evaluation team lead who will then bring it to the evaluation team. The evaluation team will then decide on the most appropriate course of action.

- The evaluation team lead will forward any clarification questions to the Qualified Supplier with a request to respond within 24-hours. Responses will be provided to all evaluators.

5.4 Method of Scoring

The evaluation team will score each Quality Criteria in the following manner:

- For simplicity and consistency, all Quality Criteria will be scored out of five (irrespective of the actual allowable points). Following the consensus meeting, the scores will be multiplied by the assigned weights to determine the normalized score for each Quality Criteria, which are then totaled to determine the result for each Submission.
- In applying scores, evaluators should ensure an open, consistent and fair evaluation process is followed. The scoring scale should follow that prescribed in the RFS.

5.5 Consensus Scoring

The following will occur during the consensus meetings:

- PPI will facilitate the process.
- Fairness will address all fairness issues raised during the evaluation and ensure scoring is consistent across all Submissions.
- Submissions will be looked at in numerical order.
- A review will occur where scores for a particular Quality Criteria are substantially different. If a single consensus score cannot be agreed upon, an average score will be calculated and used.
- When an evaluator changes a score during a consensus session, they must record their revised score and the rationale for their revised score on their Evaluation Matrix.
- The consensus score along with the reason for the score will be documented into the Master Evaluation Matrix for every Quality Criteria for every Submission.

APPENDIX A: CODE OF CONDUCT

Date: _____

From: _____

RFS Number: _____

List of Responding Qualified Suppliers

The Team Lead is to list the Respondent organizations in Attachment A to this Code of Conduct.

Code of Conduct

In fulfilling my duties as a participant in the above-named RFS procurement process, I am required to observe high standards of conduct and avoid impropriety or the appearance of impropriety so that the integrity and impartiality are preserved.

This will require that I:

- act honestly and fairly in the conduct of my duties;
- be independent and impartial at all times;
- not be influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, political considerations or fear of criticism;
- not allow any past or existing financial, business, professional, family or social relationships or responsibilities influence my conduct or judgment;
- assist and be collegial to colleagues in the performance of their duties;
- respect all members of the project team in the exchange of views, information and opinions that take place throughout the project; and
- conduct myself in a manner that is transparent and accountable.

Confidentiality

The information that I have access to be used solely for the purpose for which they were created or obtained and shall not be disclosed, utilized, directly or indirectly, after expiry or termination of the project, except and solely:

- upon mutual agreement of the parties to the disclosure of such information;
- as may be required pursuant to an arbitration or to a court in respect of a dispute;
- to the extent that any such information is generally known or available to the public or is required by law or legal process.

Conflict of Interest

*** A conflict of interest refers to situations in which personal, occupational or financial considerations may affect or appear to affect the objectivity or fairness of an individual. A conflict of interest may be **real, potential or apparent** in nature. A **real** conflict of interest arises where an individual has a private or personal interest, for example, a close family connection or financial interest with a Qualified Supplier. A **potential** conflict of interest may arise when an individual has a private or personal interest such as an identified future commitment with a Qualified Supplier. An **apparent** conflict of interest may exist when a reasonable well-informed person has a reasonable belief that he or she has a conflict of interest, even if there is no real conflict.*

The individual must check the applicable box below:

- The individual declares that he/she has a conflict of interest.
- The individual declares that he/she does not have a conflict of interest.

Signed By:

Name

Title

Date

Signature

Attachment A to the Code of Conduct

The Team Lead is to insert the names of the Respondents. Add more cells if necessary.

Respondent ID	Respondent Name
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	