

RIAM PROCUREMENT POLICY

The purpose of this Procurement Policy is to set out the principles and procedures that govern the procurement of goods, services, and works by RIAM in a manner that ensures compliance with all relevant laws and regulations, achieves value for money, promotes fairness and transparency, and encourages sustainability.

Contents

1. Purpose	2
2. Scope.....	2
3. Legal and Regulatory Framework	2
4. Procurement Principles.....	2
5. Procurement Procedures: Goods & Services	3
5.1 Single or cumulative purchases up to €5,000 (ex VAT).....	3
5.2 Single or cumulative purchases between €5,001 and €49,999 (ex VAT).....	3
5.3 Single or cumulative purchases for €50,000 and above (ex VAT).....	3
5.4 Single or cumulative purchases over €221,000 (EU Threshold)	3
5.5 Tax Clearance	4
5.6 Sole Source.....	4
5.7 Purchase Orders.....	4
6. Procurement Procedures: Works.....	4
7. Central arrangements	5
8. Procurement Planning	5
9. Supplier Selection and Evaluation.....	5
10. Contract Management.....	5
11. Ethical Considerations and Anti-Corruption	6
12. Sustainable Procurement.....	6
13. Documentation and Record-Keeping.....	6
Appendix 1: Procurement Evaluation Committee	7
Appendix 2: Conflict of Interest	8
Appendix 3: Sample Conflict of Interest Declaration.....	9
Appendix 4: Control Sheet	10

1. Purpose

This Procurement Policy sets out the principles and procedures that govern RIAM's procurement of goods, services, and works, ensuring compliance with all relevant laws and regulations, achieving value for money, promoting fairness and transparency, and encouraging sustainability.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all procurement activities undertaken by RIAM, including purchases of goods, services, consultancy, and works, regardless of value.

3. Legal and Regulatory Framework

RIAM is committed to complying with all applicable legal and regulatory frameworks, including:

- **Public Procurement Regulations** under the European Union (EU) Directives on Public Procurement. [EU Public Tendering](#)
- **Irish Public Procurement Guidelines** issued by the Office of Government Procurement (OGP) [Office of Government Procurement](#)
- **The Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies** that aims to ensure commercial and non-commercial State bodies meet the highest standards of corporate governance. [The Code of Practice](#)

4. Procurement Principles

All procurement activities must adhere to the following principles:

- **Value for Money (VFM):** Ensuring that the procurement process achieves the best possible outcome for RIAM, considering cost, quality, and efficiency.
- **Transparency:** All procurement decisions must be clear, open, and documented, allowing scrutiny and accountability.
- **Fairness and Equal Treatment:** Suppliers must be treated fairly and equitably, with no undue bias.
- **Non-Discrimination:** The procurement process should ensure that suppliers from all EU member states are treated on an equal footing.
- **Efficiency and Effectiveness:** Procurement should be completed in a timely and cost-efficient manner.
- **Sustainability:** Where appropriate, environmental, social, and economic sustainability considerations should be integrated into the procurement process.

5. Procurement Procedures: Goods & Services

Procurement processes for goods and services will vary depending on the estimated value of the contract (not the annual cost).

Up to €5,000 (ex VAT)	Single quote (see 5.1)
€5,001 to €49,999 (ex VAT)	Three written quotations (see 5.2)
€50,000 and above (ex VAT)	Via eTenders platform (see 5.3)
€221,000 and above (ex VAT)*	Via eTenders platform and the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). The RIAM Finance Committee must approve. (see 5.4)

*Please refer to EU directives as this amount can change on an annual basis.

5.1 Single or cumulative purchases up to €5,000 (ex VAT)

At a minimum, a single quotation should be sought from a competent party. While quotations may initially be obtained verbally, emailed, or written copies should be obtained and retained on record with the eventual purchase order. In the event that budget holders are unable to access three quotations, evidence for this must be retained.

5.2 Single or cumulative purchases between €5,001 and €49,999 (ex VAT)

At a minimum, the following will be required

- Three written quotations from interested and competent suppliers/service providers;
- Evaluate offers against relevant requirements using a scoring sheet;
- Select the most suitable offer and advise all tenderers regarding the decision.

In the event that purchasers are unable to access three quotations, evidence for this must be retained.

5.3 Single or cumulative purchases for €50,000 and above (ex VAT)

Will be subject to a written formal tender process through **eTenders** which is Ireland's national procurement platform, used by public sector bodies to advertise and manage procurement opportunities. The following are the main steps

- Prepare Tender Documentation
- Advertise the Tender
- Receive and Manage Submissions
- Evaluate Submissions
- Award Contract
- Manage the Contract

5.4 Single or cumulative purchases over €221,000 (EU Threshold)

In addition to the use of eTenders purchases must also be advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).

5.5 Tax Clearance

Suppliers are obliged to demonstrate tax compliance in the case of all contracts where the value or cumulative value exceeds **€10,000 (Inc. VAT)** within any 12-month period. It is incumbent on budget holders to provide evidence of tax compliance prior to placing an order with the supplier. The Accounts Payable section will not pay any invoices until such a certificate has been provided.

Prior to the award of a contract, the successful tenderer is required to supply its Tax Clearance Access Number and Tax Reference Number to facilitate online verification of its tax status.

5.6 Sole Source

Where quotations or tenders are not being sought, on the basis that only one supplier source exists, orders for items or services will be authorised by the CFO and a Sole Source justification will be required. Such derogations should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

Where there are insufficient suppliers willing to submit quotations or tenders in respect of a request and the number of quotes available is fewer than the required number, a note to that effect, establishing the number of available suppliers with copies of any correspondence must be placed on the appropriate file.

5.7 Purchase Orders

Purchase orders are generated by the relevant department/function and approved by the budget holder for all orders in excess of €500. For orders less than this a purchase order is not required if it is with an approved supplier.

6. Procurement Procedures: Works

Procurement processes for works will vary depending on the estimated value of the contract (not the annual cost).

Up to €200,000 (ex VAT)	By direct invitation, seek a minimum of 5 written tenders from interested and competent contractors.
€200,000 and above (ex VAT)	Via eTenders platform, please refer to section 5.3. The RIAM Finance Committee must approve.
€5,538,000 and above (ex VAT)*	Via eTenders platform and the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). The RIAM Finance Committee must approve.

*Please refer to EU directives as this amount can change on an annual basis.

7. Central arrangements

The Office of Government Procurement (OGP) is part of the Irish government, is responsible for managing public procurement processes across various government departments and agencies. Central arrangements refer to frameworks or contracts set up by the OGP, which are available for use by public sector bodies. These arrangements aim to streamline procurement, ensure value for money, and simplify the purchasing process for public organisations.

Where possible it is recommended that RIAM budget holders avail of these services.

- **Framework Agreements:** These are contracts established for specific goods, services, or works. Once a framework is in place, public bodies can purchase from the suppliers listed without the need for a full tender process each time.
- **National Procurement Service:** This service, part of the OGP, handles a wide range of procurement needs on behalf of public bodies. By leveraging the collective purchasing power of the state, it aims to achieve better prices and more efficient procurement practices.
- **Convenience and Compliance:** Using central arrangements ensures that procurement practices comply with legal and regulatory standards, making the process quicker and easier for government entities.

The OGP currently provide services under a set list of categories, Facilities Management; Utilities; Marketing, Print and Stationery; Travel, HR and managed Services; Fleet and Plant; Information and Communications Technology; Professional Services; Spot Buying.

8. Procurement Planning

Procurement activities must be planned in advance. All procurement actions should align with the annual budget, and a detailed procurement plan should be prepared for any significant purchases.

9. Supplier Selection and Evaluation

Suppliers will be selected based on pre-defined criteria such as technical expertise, quality of service, price competitiveness, and past performance. The evaluation process should be objective, and all evaluation criteria must be clearly documented in the tender documents.

10. Contract Management

Once a contract has been awarded, the budget holder must ensure that the terms and conditions are fully adhered to and that any variations or issues are promptly addressed. Regular reviews of supplier performance and compliance with contract terms should be conducted.

The maximum duration of an agreement (contract) is normally three years and the terms and criteria for awarding contracts must be published at the outset and must not change. Derogations from this policy must be approved by the Chief Financial Officer.

11. Ethical Considerations and Anti-Corruption

RIAM promotes the highest ethical standards in procurement. Employees involved in procurement activities must not engage in conflicts of interest and must follow anti-corruption measures.

A conflict of interest arises where a decision maker has some other interest that could materially interfere with their duty to act impartially in the evaluation process. Each member of a selection committee has an obligation to disclose any conflict of interest before participating in an evaluation (see Appendix 1 for further information).

Suppliers must adhere to ethical business practices, and any attempt to influence procurement decisions through bribery, gifts, or other inappropriate actions will result in immediate disqualification.

12. Sustainable Procurement

Sustainable Procurement relates to the conscious purchasing of goods and services that are produced in an environmentally, ethical, and socially responsible way. RIAM encourages all areas to make purchasing decisions that support RIAM's goals to minimise harm to the natural world.

13. Documentation and Record-Keeping

All procurement processes, including tendering, evaluation, and awarding contracts, must be fully documented and records maintained in a central location on MS Teams.

Budget holders should be aware that the internal auditors of RIAM and the staff of the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office have full, free, and unrestricted access to all procurement records. Budget holders shall grant full and free access to all documents and decisions relating to any procurement activity that any auditor requires.

On receipt of any observations resulting from any such audit, the budget holder concerned shall be responsible for ensuring that replies (if any) are furnished to the relevant auditor.

Appendix 1: Procurement Evaluation Committee

A procurement evaluation committee (PEC) plays a critical role in ensuring a transparent, fair, and objective evaluation of bids or proposals in a procurement process.

Determine the Committee's Purpose and Scope

Clearly define the objectives of the evaluation committee. This includes reviewing and assessing procurement proposals, selecting vendors, and ensuring compliance with procurement policies.

Identify Key Roles and Responsibilities

The committee should have a mix of roles to ensure that all aspects of the procurement process are covered effectively. Aim to have a mix of skills, perspectives, and gender diversity on the committee. A diverse committee can contribute to more thorough evaluations and decisions that reflect a broader range of considerations.

- **Chairperson:** Typically the budget holder, the chairperson oversees the evaluation process and ensures transparency and fairness.
- **Technical Experts:** Subject matter experts who can evaluate the technical aspects of the proposals, such as product quality, service capability, or technical feasibility.
- **Other Stakeholders:** Depending on the nature of the procurement, additional members might include end users or departments directly impacted by the procurement.
- **Consider External Advisors:** In complex or high-value procurements, it may be helpful to bring in external advisors or consultants to provide an additional layer of expertise or an independent viewpoint.

Select Members Based on Expertise and Impartiality

- **Expertise:** Members should be chosen based on their knowledge of the procurement items or services and the evaluation criteria.
- **Impartiality:** It is critical to ensure that committee members have no conflicts of interest or biases toward any of the bidders or suppliers.
- **Experience:** Ideally, members should have experience in procurement or have participated in evaluations before.

Appendix 2: Conflict of Interest

Conflicts of interest may arise in procurement decision-making processes, specifically in relation to Evaluation Committees (EC).

A conflict of interest arises where an EC member has some other interest that could materially interfere with their duty to act impartially in the evaluation process. Each EC member has an obligation to disclose any conflict of interest before participating in the evaluation.

A conflict of interest affects, or can be perceived to affect, a person's independence, objectivity or impartiality. Generally, a conflict of interest can arise due to;

- **A relationship:** This category covers a range of different types of relationships, such as business interests, family, close personal friendships or political affiliations.
- **An activity:** This category covers a range of different types of activities that the EC member is involved in, in relation to a firm bidding for the contract. A conflict of interest can arise when the EC member, for example, has received or expects to receive gifts or hospitality from the firm, owes money to the firm, or has a professional or legal obligation to the firm.

Conflict of interest is often categorised into three types. These are where a person's independence, objectivity or impartiality are compromised (**Actual**), could be compromised (**Potential**), or may be seen by some as being compromised (**Perceived**).

It is therefore essential to take measures to preclude a conflict of interest impacting a procurement. In advance of commencing an evaluation, each member of the EC must confirm that no conflicts of interest exist. If in any doubt it should be discussed with the Chair or the Chief Financial Officer.

The four key steps in dealing with a Conflict of Interest are:



Further information can be obtained from the RIAM Conflict of Interest policy.

Appendix 3: Sample Conflict of Interest Declaration

Name (of the person making the Declaration):

Position/title:

Procurement Project:

DECLARATION

I understand my role as a member of this procurement Evaluation Committee and I make this declaration in good faith. *Select one of the following two options:*

NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST

☐ I have no actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest in relation to this procurement process and my role as a member of the Evaluation Committee and I undertake to carry out my duties with the highest degree of objectivity and integrity.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

☐ I have a conflict of interest.

1. Select the type of conflict of interest:

☐ **Actual:** This is an existing conflict of interest, for example: you have a close relative who is a director of one of the firms that has submitted a bid/proposal.

☐ **Potential:** This is a conflict of interest that is about to happen or could happen, for example: you or a close relative is in the process of being hired by, or acquiring part or full ownership of a firm that has submitted a bid/proposal.

☐ **Perceived:** This is a conflict of interest which might be reasonably perceived by others as compromising a person's objectivity, for example: you have a close personal friendship with a director of one of the firms that has submitted a bid/proposal.

2. Describe the circumstances giving rise to the conflict of interest:

Signature

Date

Appendix 4: Control Sheet

Title:	Procurement Policy
Author (Responsible):	Chief Financial Officer
Owner (Accountable):	Director
Department:	Finance
Contact:	Chief Financial Officer
Version No.	2.0
Status:	Approved
Reviewed by (Consulted):	The Finance Committee
Approved by:	The Board of Governors
Date of approval:	20/02/2025
Frequency of review:	Triennially
Date of next review:	January 2028
Trinity Academic Council:	TBC