



Alberta Association  
of Services for  
Children and Families

# Public Sector Procurement



Developed and delivered by Three•E Training Inc.  
Victoria, British Columbia  
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## Issues

- *Executive Council* Direction = Compete Contracts
- Interprovincial Trade Agreements
- Procurement/Contract Law
- Legislation: Children and Youth Services
- Outcome Based Service Delivery (OBSD)

## Learning Outcomes

- Appreciation: Rules of the Road
- Quality Submissions
- Efficient Preparation



## Today



- Presentation and Discussion
- Handbook
- Reference through two sample RFPs
- Timing
- Facility
- ??

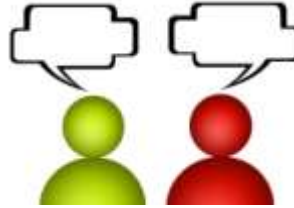
## Common Procurement Tools

- Request for Qualifications
- Request for Quotation
- Request for Information
- Request for Proposal
- Request for Standing Offer



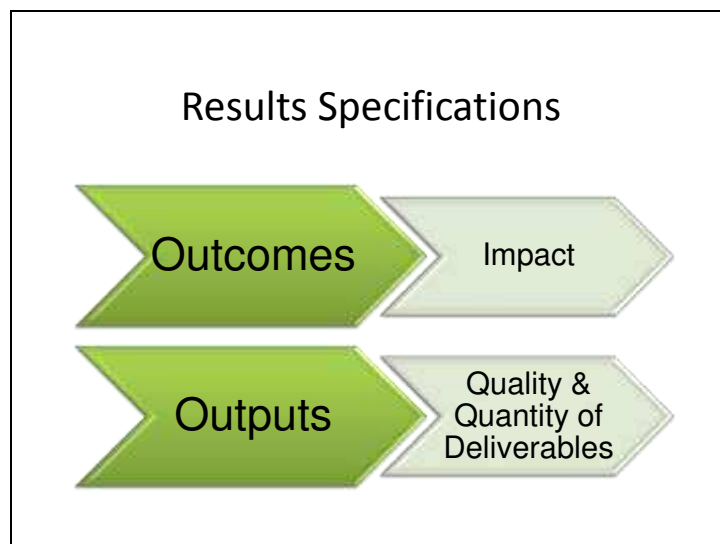
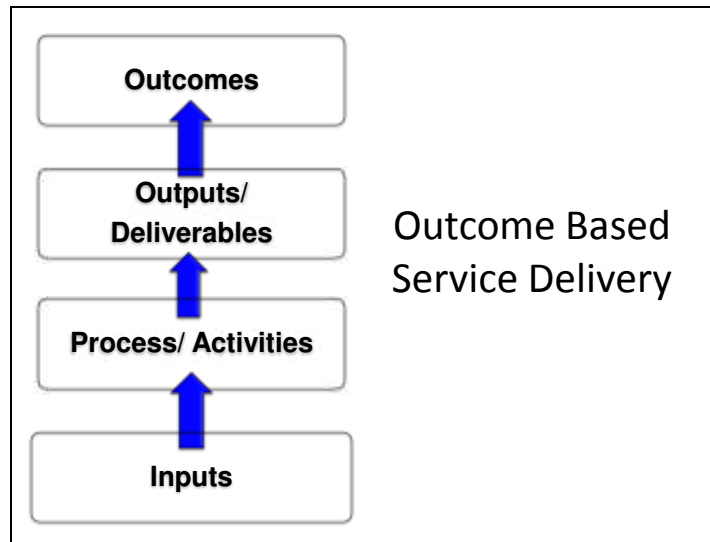
## Request for Proposal

- Competitive and collaborative procurement
- Seeks innovation and creativity
- Most sophisticated procurement for both parties
- Price is only part of it



## The RFP Document

- Terms and Conditions (and Definitions?)
  - Procurement
  - Contract
- Desired outcomes and what seeking to purchase
- Evaluation Criteria: Mandatories and Desirables
- Submission Format Requirements
- Reference materials





## Evaluation Criteria

- Mandatories: Musts, Closed-ended
- Desirables:
  - Wants and Nice To's: Open-ended
  - Proposed Deliverables
  - How Services Delivered
  - How Outcomes Align and Measured
  - Innovation and Creativity?
  - To What Extent Achieved/Likely to Achieve
  - Weighted and Scored
- Both?

# Drafting Selection Criteria (RFP)

## Introduction

The evaluation team that has met during the planning phase should not have difficulty in choosing what the selection criteria is to be. The selection criteria flow naturally out of the defined requirements and Terms of Reference. However, it is critical to take time to make certain that the selection criteria is clearly outlined in the solicitation tool, as well as the matrix evaluation team members will use to score submissions.

## Writing Strategy

An effective strategy is to guide contractor response by asking a series of questions rather than stating specifications. Use the general selection criteria as a framework and design the questions to be open and related to each of the criteria. For example, rather than specifying the schedule that must be met, ask (give a stipulated start date) "What will your scheduled completion date be?" or rather than specifying a particular performance method, indicate the end result desired and ask, "What methods will you employ to ensure the desired result?" When evaluating the various answers to these and other well-chosen questions, it will be clear whether the proposal is meeting the given criteria.

Question Examples		
Criteria	Mandatory (Closed)	Desirable (Open)
Experience	3 years, government projects	"How does your past experience prepare you to accomplish and follow through on your proposed solution?"
Methodology	Provide the services using specified method	"What method will you use in providing the services? Why you have chosen that method?"  "Relate your back-up plans. How will these contingencies be managed and actioned?"
Management Plan	Contractor will provide the following reports	"How will you monitor performance, what reports will be used, how will you ensure quality control, and who will be doing the monitoring?"



The selection criteria is the part of the RFP that the contractor will focus on, therefore, careful drafting of this section is crucial. A helpful strategy is to have an informed staff member review the draft to be sure all key information has been covered. Note that the above example questions guide the structure of the response without leading the contractor in terms of specifying the content, method or approach.

### **Mandatories**

For the purposes of an RFP, the meaning of mandatory:

- is an item of information which must be included in the response submission (proposal) to avoid automatic rejection
- may apply to required attendance to site viewing or a proponent conference

Conversely, mandatory, when dealing with RFPs does not refer to:

- an important standard in the RFP that should be met by the proponent

Caution must be used in deciding what mandatories will be included. If mandatories are too rigorous, key competitors may be eliminated, if too vague the mandatory cannot be used, if the requirement is too low then the mandatories will be of no use in short-listing or reducing the field.

Mandatories are not to be "evaluated": they consist of several requirements that must be included for the proposal to be considered. If all mandatories are included, the proposal can then be evaluated against the selection criteria. If one or more mandatories are left out, the proposal is rejected without further consideration.

The main objective of including mandatories is to create an initial threshold that will, in a fair way, reduce the number of responses and ensure that all required information has been included with the proposal to allow the team to evaluate fairly. Be sure that mandatories do not eliminate the little guy — many small contractors have the capability also. Mandatories should not be slanted in a way that only large firms could meet them. Checking the mandatories with a "yes" or "no" will indicate whether or not the information is included.

**Examples of typical mandatories include:**

- submit financial statement or credit reference
- provide performance references
- include a schedule of work with your proposal
- submit professional resumes of staff assigned to the contract project indicating their role
- include proof of professional designation for all applicable staff
- list the equipment required, including specifications and availability
- a minimum of ( ) years experience is required, provide proof of compliance
- must indicate previous public sector experience
- attend site viewing or proponent conference

**Examples of inappropriately worded mandatories include:**

- "must be financially stable"
- "must have adequate, serviceable equipment"
- "must demonstrate relevant experience"
- "must have sufficiently trained, professional staff"

Inappropriate mandatories solicit responses that would have to be evaluated.

**Award Stage — Checking for Mandatories**

Due to the nature and purpose of mandatories, the only appropriate time to check for them is at the start. The very first step (after all late proposals have been returned unopened) is to quickly check through each proposal to see if the mandatory items are included. It is recommended that evaluators do not read or review in any detail any proposal while checking mandatories.

# Evaluation Criteria

## **Mandatory**

Proponents must commit to measuring outcomes.

## **Appropriate Response**

We commit to measuring outcomes as part of this project.

## **Desirable**

How will you measure outcomes?

## **Response**

### ***Inappropriate***

We will measure outcomes as part of this project.

### ***Appropriate (to what degree?)***

Our Agency has been seeking to measure outcomes for over X years. These efforts align with and are informed by the National Outcomes Matrix (NOX). See appendix four for further elaboration.

We rely upon outcome indicators to track, monitor and report on all client and project outcomes. While client outcomes are of prime focus, the importance of collaborative attention to project outcomes pertaining to the administration and management of resources cannot be underestimated.

While outcomes may not be measured with exacting metrics, we recognize bundles of indicators can provide a reasonably accurate method for tracking, monitoring and reporting on outcomes.

We will work collaboratively with the Department in the ongoing evolution of collecting, measuring and reporting on outcomes.

**Mandatory**

Proponents must agree to comply with *Freedom of Information and Protect of Privacy Legislation*.

**Response**

We will comply with *Freedom of Information and Protect of Privacy Legislation*.

**Desirable**

How will you comply with *Freedom of Information and Protect of Privacy Legislation*?

**Inappropriate**

We will comply with *Freedom of Information and Protect of Privacy Legislation*.

**Appropriate (to what degree?)**

All of our staff are knowledgeable of FOIPP Legislation and sign an acknowledgement to that effect annually. All new staff will be expected to review the Legislation and sign such an acknowledgement within 30 days of employment.

Our agency also has a designated Subject Matter Expert who reasonable for monitoring governance pertaining to FOIPP including hard copy and electronic file storage, management, access and disposal.

Client files are of prime concern and will be protected with the greatest effort.

## Decision to Submit

Read it to determine:

- What we do/able to do/want to do?
- Can we meet all of the mandatories?
- Desirable scoring/Weighting
  - Competitive?
  - Upset Scoring Requirements?



## Evaluation Sheet – Desirables

Project Name \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation Team Member Identifier \_\_\_\_\_

Proponent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation Criteria			
	Weighting	Score 1 – 5	Actual
<b>Proponent</b>			
• Reference(s) Quality			
• Qualifications			
• Experience			
• Past Performance			
• Facilities and Other Resources			
• Organizational			
– Capacity			
– Infrastructure			
Upset Requirement Score 70%			
<b>Proposal</b>			
• Results			
– Methodology			
• Risk Management			
– Methodology			
• Creativity/Innovation			
• Business Continuation Plan			
Upset Requirement Score 60%			
<b>Financial</b>			
• Total Project/Unit Cost			
• Realistic Costing			
• Payment Approach			
<b>Totals:</b>			

Comments: Provide rationale for where Proponent scored high and low for specific desirables:

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## Submission Format

- Avoid generic submissions
- Mandatory versus Desirable Requirements
- Sections
- Forms
- Seek clarity:
  - Protocol and Contract Law
  - Questions to respond to?
  - Procurer's terminology?

## Responding to Questions

- Answer explicitly
- Evidence-based responses/statements
- Explain logic models with rationale
- Avoid platitudes
- Proper terminology
  - Procurer's terminology
  - Avoid dated terminology
  - Define new terminology

## Emphasize

- Outcomes you will seek to influence and how they align with the procurer's strategic priorities/outcomes
- How desired outcomes align with your vision/mission/principles/values
- How you do/will measure outcomes
- How you will deliver services
- Risks/uncertainties and how you will manage/mitigate

## Preferred Language

- |          |            |
|----------|------------|
| Active   | Passive    |
| Personal | Impersonal |
| Concrete | Abstract   |
| Concise  | Voluminous |



## Consideration of Options

- Cadillac:  
All the bells and whistles?
- Practical: Cost effective
- Bare Bones: Bottom line



## Budgets

- Standardized format/Mandatory?
- Explicitly relate to what is being proposed
- Align funding with effort
- Something you can live with/be bound by/ capacity to deliver with
- Negotiation not a next step



## Proofing and Editing

- Mandatories met?
- Format
  - Questions answered
  - Effort based on desirable weighting
- 3rd Party Review: Dumb questions?



## Key Milestones

- Request for Information\*
- Exploration of partnerships\*
- Release of solicitation document
- Review of document\*
- Posing of questions to procurer
- First draft/Outline: Midpoint of procurement
- Proofing/Editing
- Submission: How early?



## Shortlisted Interviews



- Weighting to overall score?
- New desirables?
- Clarification only
- Must be knowledgeable of submission

## Seek Insights/Debriefings

- Success or not!
- Areas of weakness and strength
- Comment on only your submission
- Note: FOIPP restrictions
- Identification of successful/other proponents
- Provide feedback to procurer



## All Parties

- On a learning curve
- Legislative governance
- Government direction
- Trade agreements
- Procurement/Contract law



## Mandatories and Desirables

- Proponent Experience/Background/Capacity
- Proposed Solution: Results and Risks
- Budget: Total;  
Realistic Outcome
- Administrative:  
The Procurement

