Procurement Procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) Charles Darwin University ('CDU', 'The University') has a responsibility to ensure that all procurement activities are conducted with integrity and in a competitive, transparent and consistent manner.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This procedure outlines the process to be undertaken when procuring goods and services on behalf of CDU and ensures all procurement activities are aligned to the University's Procurement Principles of value for money, ethical behaviour, fair dealing and transparency, open and effective competition, and responsible purchasing.

(3) All procurement activities must be undertaken in accordance with CDU's Procurement Policy, Delegations Policy, and the Legal Agreements Policy and Procedure.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This procedure applies to the procurement of goods and services for or on behalf of CDU, regardless of the source of funding.

(5) It is applicable to all CDU employees (including adjunct, temporary and casual employees), contractors and consultants involved in procurement activities or purchasing for or on behalf of CDU.

Section 4 - Procedure

Roles and Responsibilities

(6) The primary roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Role	Responsibility	Who
Purchaser	Responsible for determining needs, procurement planning, checking funds availability and going to market or getting quotations.	Any employee
Requisitioner	Responsible for raising Purchase Requisitions and issuing Purchase Orders based on information provided by the Purchaser and ensuring all relevant information such as quotations, supplier details, and cost codes are accurate and complete.	Authorised and trained employee
Approver	Financial delegate who has the authority to commit University funds for Procurement. Responsible for ensuring that the amount to be spent does not exceed their delegation limit, is in-line with approved budget allocations and the Procurement Policy and this procedure has been complied with.	Appropriately delegated University Representative

Segregation of Duties

(7) Employees may be involved in Procurement in different roles. Segregation of duties is critical to minimise the risks of unauthorised or inappropriate spending, and therefore an individual employee will not have more than one role in the procurement process.

(8) Where an employee has accepted a gift or benefit, including hospitality, from a prospective or current commercial vendor, supplier, or contractor, they must recuse themselves from any procurement processes, or new or renewal contract negotiations/panels that involve the giver. This recusal must last for 12 months following the acceptance of that gift, benefit, or hospitality.

Procurement Process Overview

(9) The Procurement process is detailed in the Procurement Process flowchart.

(10) All procurement activities must be undertaken using the University's standard suite of procurement documents and templates.

Procurement Lifecycle

(11) The procurement lifecycle has three stages and accompanying activities, as outlined below:

a. Planning – defining specific procurement needs and planning specific procurement approaches.
b. Sourcing – the process of inviting business and industry to submit offers, and the steps associated with assessing, negotiating and awarding contracts.
c. Contract Management – systematically and effectively managing contract establishment, execution and closure, including a review of contractor performance and the recording of lessons learned.

Planning

(12) Planning is the first stage of the procurement lifecycle.

Planning activity	Description
Define the need	Clearly and effectively define the specific procurement needs and requirements along with any associated outcomes.
Plan the procurement approach	Identify the most appropriate way to approach the market to achieve the best result.

(13) Planning is to be undertaken for every procurement activity. Consideration must be given to the value and risk of the procurement activity when determining the level of planning required.

(14) During the planning phase, the procurement need must be clearly and effectively defined to assist in identifying the most appropriate way to approach the market to achieve the best result for the University.

(15) Procurement activity relating to Digital Technology must be reviewed by the Chief Information and Digital Officer or delegate to ensure the University's technology standards, compliance and security requirements continue to be met.

(16) Where the procurement of equipment/goods may impact University infrastructure or facilities service, or is dependent on specific infrastructure or services being in place for the equipment/goods to be used for its intended purpose, the purchasing officer must consult with the Director Property and Facilities (DPF) or delegate to confirm:

a. the proposed equipment/goods comply with the University's Property and Facilities standards.

b. all relevant regulatory, safety, and compliance requirements are met.
c. any infrastructure, installation, modification, ongoing maintenance requirements, running costs or other lifecycle costs are identified, costed, approved, and appropriately planned.
d. there is sufficient space available to house, install or otherwise locate the goods at CDU.

(17) Procurement must not proceed unless written confirmation has been obtained that the above requirements have been satisfied.

(18) Employees responsible for procurement activities are strongly encouraged to use Supply Nation, Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, or Northern Territory Indigenous Business Network databases to identify First Nations businesses/suppliers who have the capacity, capability and/or experience to provide the goods and/or services required by the University.

(19) Procurement activities must not be divided into separate phases or parts to avoid the procurement threshold requirements outlined in the Procurement Policy and this procedure.

Sourcing

(20) Sourcing is the second stage of the procurement lifecycle.

Sourcing activity	Description
Approach the market	Develop supporting documentation to approach the market
Assess and negotiate	Assess responses to identify preferred supplier/s and undertake negotiation (if required).
Select and award	Select recommended supplier/s and finalise and award the contract.

(21) Before sourcing any goods or services externally, purchasers must determine if their requirements can be met via the Procurement Category Register.

Management of Legal Agreements

(22) The management of legal agreements is the third stage of the procurement lifecycle.

Contract Management activity	Description
Establish the legal agreement	Effectively commence the legal agreement to facilitate successful agreement execution.
Manage the legal agreement	Proactively manage the legal agreement to ensure the successful achievement of contractual outcomes (the delivery of required supplies).
Close out the legal agreement	Ensure that all required supplies have been delivered and all contractual obligations are finalised for both parties. Undertake a review and evaluate learnings for future procurement activities.

Category Procurement

(23) Sourcing goods or services through the Procurement Category Register is the most efficient way to comply with the University's Procurement Policy.

(24) Where a Procurement Category exists, the preferred supplier associated with that Procurement Category must be used. The Category Manager listed against the procurement category will provide contact details and advice on engaging the preferred supplier.

(25) Where a panel of preferred suppliers exists for a Procurement Category, the Category Manager listed against the procurement category will provide advice on the panel supplier arrangement.

(26) Obtaining additional quotations is not required when sourcing from the Procurement Category Register.

(27) The Procurement Category Register is updated when new categories or preferred suppliers are engaged by the University.

(28) Suppliers may only be added to the Procurement Category Register following completion of an approved procurement process. Inclusion on the Procurement Category Register must be supported by:

a. a formal competitive procurement process, conducted in accordance with this procedure and the Procurement Policy; and
b. the execution of an appropriate legal agreement between CDU and the supplier defining the terms, conditions, pricing, and scope of goods and/or services to be provided.

(29) Following completion of the procurement process and execution of the relevant legal agreement, the Contract Manager must contact Procurement to request that the supplier be added to the Procurement Category Register.

(30) Procurement is responsible for reviewing the request and updating the Procurement Category Register where the required procurement and contracting requirements have been satisfied.

Threshold Procurement

(31) Where goods and/or services are unable to be sourced via the Procurement Category, an open and competitive procurement approach must be undertaken to provide suppliers equal opportunity to participate.

(32) There are four monetary thresholds, all GST exclusive, each with its own procurement process and minimum requirement. The full value of the procurement activity will determine the relevant procurement process to be used when approaching the market.

(33) The table below defines the procurement threshold, procurement process and minimum requirements to be undertaken.

Threshold value (ex GST)	Procurement Process	Minimum Requirement
$25,000 or below	Request for quotation	One written quotation
$25,001 - $50,000	Request for quotation	At least two written quotations
$50,001 – $200,000	Request for quotation	At least three written quotations
Over $200,000	Request for Tender (RFT), Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Information (RFI), Request for Quotation (RFQ)	Public or Select market approach via an RFx process.

Market Approach

(34) The University uses a variety of open or select market approach methods, sometimes in a staged process, with the most appropriate approach being determined during the planning phase of the procurement activity.

(35) The approach methods that may be considered are outlined in the following table:

Approach method	Description
Expression of Interest (EOI)	Primarily used to determine the market's ability or desire to meet the procurement need, following which the University may collect additional information to make informed procurement decisions. An EOI is not an invitation to bid, is not binding on either party, and is usually followed by a select Request for Tender (RFT) that will provide more detailed specifications.

Approach method	Description
Request for Information (RFI)	Used to collect written information related to the capabilities of various suppliers to assist in refining the final scope and/or participants in a Request for Quotation (RFQ), Request for Proposal (RFP) or Request for Tender (RFT). An RFI is not an invitation to bid and is not binding on either party.
Request for Quotation (RFQ)	Used when detailed specifications of the goods or services are known, and competitive bids are to be evaluated mainly on price.
Request for Proposal (RFP)	Primarily used when purchasing goods or services when the University clearly understands its business needs; however, it does not have defined details of the solution or is seeking an innovative solution. This approach is often used for the procurement of professional services or as part of digital technology solution projects.
Request for Tender (RFT)	Used when the University is seeking potential suppliers for a particular scope of works which has been designed and specified in detail. A RFT is often used for building or construction projects where the evaluation process is based on price as well as a range of technical factors or requirements.

Request for Quotation

(36) The employee or contract manager requesting the quotations must prepare a Request for Quotation (RFQ) document prior to obtaining the quotations for goods or services. This should be prepared using the relevant University Procurement Templates form.

(37) Quotation documentation must be written in such a way that it does not unduly limit the range of potential suppliers or provide an unfair advantage to a particular supplier.

(38) Information to be included in the RFQ document must include:

a. a clear description of the goods or services to be procured;
b. detailed specifications and/or terms of engagement;
c. quantity (units or hours as applicable);
d. contact details for the relevant business unit;
e. delivery time or other requirements;
f. point of delivery or performance as required; and
g. any other relevant information that will ensure all suppliers have a clear understanding of the requirements to enable them to provide accurate and comparable quotations.

(39) Quotations must request the full costs of supply including, where relevant, details of freight, licensing, installation costs, support, and maintenance.

(40) All potential suppliers must receive the same information and time for a response so that no supplier is given a potentially unfair advantage.

(41) When planning to approach suppliers to seek quotations, the employee or contract manager must consider current market conditions, with a view to increasing the likelihood of obtaining the required minimum number of quotations. This may include approaching more suppliers than the minimum required to allow for potential non-response, and allowing sufficient time for potential suppliers to submit a quotation.

(42) In the event a quotation provides an overall better value for money outcome, the University reserves the right to accept that quotation, regardless of whether it is the lowest quotation submitted. In such cases the justification must be clearly outlined when raising the purchase requisition.

(43) Unsuccessful suppliers or contractors should be notified of the outcome of the quotation process by using the University's relevant approved Procurement Templates.

Public and Select Tender Process

(44) Procurement activities with an expected total cost of over $200,000 (ex GST) require either a public or select tender process to be undertaken.

(45) When undertaking a select tender process, a minimum of four potential suppliers must be invited to submit a response.

(46) Where a select tender process is to be undertaken and less than four potential suppliers are being invited to submit a response, an Alternative Procurement Method (APM) request must be prepared and approved by the Procurement Steering Group (PSG) before issuing the tender.

(47) All tender processes will be facilitated in consultation with the Procurement team.

Tender Preparation

(48) The contract manager will ensure that appropriate approval is in place to go to tender and that the procurement activity being undertaken has an approved budget. This process includes the completion and approval of a Request to Initiate Tender form available in the University's approved Procurement Templates.

(49) Tender documentation will be prepared by the contract manager, in consultation with Procurement, and will clearly and accurately specify the:

a. full scope of work in relation to the goods and services;
b. risk, ethical and social trading compliance requirements;
c. evaluation criteria to be used in the evaluation of tender responses from potential suppliers. This will include both mandatory and desirable criteria;
d. format of responses from potential suppliers;
e. draft contract to be executed (where relevant); and
f. conditions of tendering including details of how to lodge a tender.

Establish Evaluation Criteria

(50) The evaluation criteria will include measurable components specific to the project, such as:

a. capacity to undertake the scope of works;
b. service delivery and implementation strategies;
c. previous performance;
d. timeliness and methodology;
e. sustainability;
f. Commitment to capacity building and local content;
g. Modern Slavery; and
h. value for money / price.

Tender Evaluation Panel

(51) A Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) will be convened to assess and select suitable tender responses based on the evaluation criteria.

(52) The evaluation panel will consist of a minimum of three members including:

a. a subject matter expert who is familiar with the procurement requirements;

b. the project manager; and
c. a representative external to/independent of the business unit undertaking the tender process.

(53) All TEP members must comply with the University's Code of Conduct – Employees and Conflicts of Interest Policy, any other associated procedures and Governance documents.

(54) All TEP members are required to maintain confidentiality and disclose any conflict of interest, whether perceived, potential or actual. Each panel member will be required to sign a Conflict of Interest Declaration and Confidentiality Deed which can be accessed via the University's approved Procurement Templates, prior to commencement of the evaluation and tender responses.

Invite Tenders

(55) All tender documents will be issued by Procurement or the contract manager and will be managed centrally through the University's approved marketplace platform Tenderlink.

(56) Each potential supplier must be provided the same tender documentation, including any background, supplementary, or amendment material issued during the tender process.

(57) Communication through the tender process, including site inspections and any pre-tender briefing sessions or presentations, will be managed in an open and transparent manner. All potential suppliers will be provided with the same information and the same response time to ensure that no single supplier is potentially given an unfair advantage. This includes clarifications on any aspect of the tender.

Evaluation of Market Responses

(58) Each tender response will be reviewed by the TEP Chair appointed by one of the three TEP members, for compliance with any mandatory requirements, and if compliant, will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria as specified in the Part 1 – Request for Tender document available via the University's approved Procurement Templates.

(59) The TEP will be convened for a pre-evaluation meeting to discuss how the evaluation will be conducted and to confirm the scoring methodology to be used.

(60) Members of the TEP will undertake an independent evaluation of all compliant tender responses, scoring each tender against the selection criteria as specified in the Part 1 – Request for Tender document available at the University's approved Procurement Templates.

(61) Following the independent evaluation process, the TEP will re-convene to undertake a combined evaluation of the tender responses to select a preferred respondent.

(62) The TEP will document the outcome of its evaluation in a tender evaluation report.

(63) Referee checks, coordinated by the TEP Chair, will be conducted on the preferred respondent to validate the information provided in their tender response.

(64) The tender evaluation report must:

a. summarise the tender process undertaken and detail all tender responses received;
b. outline the evaluation process undertaken, including how the final scores have been obtained and the justification for selecting the preferred respondent;
c. rank responses in an order of merit according to their evaluation scores;
d. note any opposing views on the scores or outcomes;

e. note any potential constraints or risks;
f. provide the outcome of referee checks undertaken;
g. confirm all tender respondent documents will remain confidential;
h. recommend the acceptance of the highest ranked tender respondent subject to satisfactory negotiation of a contract; and
i. be signed by all TEP members.

(65) The tender evaluation report must be submitted to and approved by the Procurement Steering Group before notifying respondents of the tender outcome.

(66) All documentation associated with the procurement exercise must be provided to Procurement for storage and retention purposes.

Notification of Outcomes

(67) Successful respondents will be notified in writing by the contract manager that their tender has been accepted, subject to the negotiation and execution of a contract.

(68) Unsuccessful respondents will be notified in a timely matter in writing by the contract manager that they have been unsuccessful. This should occur after firm agreement has been reached with the successful respondent and preferably after the contract has been executed.

(69) If an unsuccessful respondent requests a debriefing, the TEP Chair has the discretion to provide more detailed feedback in terms of their performance against the evaluation criteria. Information about other tender respondents must not be divulged. All debriefings must be conducted by at least two TEP members and must be documented.

(70) Sample pro-forma successful/unsuccessful tender letters are available on the Waterhole's Procurement Templates page.

Alternative Procurement Method

(71) Where goods and services cannot be sourced through a preferred supplier on the Procurement Category Register or Threshold Procurement, an Alternative Procurement Method (APM) request must be prepared.

(72) When completing the APM, the following information and evidence must be provided to support the alternative process:

a. description of goods/services being procured, name of recommended supplier, contract term, total procurement value over the contract term, cost code, confirmation the procurement activity has an approved budget;
b. summary of the procurement activity being undertaken and how the recommended supplier was sourced;
c. reasons why the procurement activity couldn't be sourced from the Procurement Category Register and/or why the required number of quotations were unable to be obtained;
d. an explanation of how each of the four procurement principles are being adhered to;
e. risks associated with the procurement activity and how the risks will be managed;
f. description of internal stakeholder engagement undertaken to assist in identifying potential impacts the procurement activity may have on their respective business operations; and
g. declaration of any conflicts of interest that exist.

(73) APM requests must be endorsed by a Senior Executive Team (SET) member and approved by the Procurement Steering Group.

(74) The approval of an APM requires the agreement of a majority of Procurement Steering Group members present.

In the event of a tied vote, the Vice-Chancellor will review the request.

(75) Procurement Steering Group members cannot vote on any APM submitted from their own Division of the University.

(76) Retrospective approval of an Alternative Procurement Method request will not be granted under any circumstances.

(77) An Alternative Procurement Method request must be submitted to and approved by the Procurement Steering Group prior to engaging a supplier, issuing a purchase order, or entering into any legal agreement.

(78) Where a supplier is engaged, or a commitment is made without prior approval of the Alternative Procurement Method request, the procurement will be deemed non-compliant and may be escalated for Governance review, with corrective action required.

Management of Legal Agreements

(79) Where possible the University will provide a draft legal agreement as part of the tender documentation. Providing a draft legal agreement should also assist in shortening the negotiation period once a preferred respondent is selected.

(80) CDU Legal must review and approve all variations proposed by a supplier to a standard CDU legal agreement, or any proposed non-University legal agreements.

(81) The agreed terms and conditions for the supply of the goods or services must be included in a formal legal agreement document and be executed by both parties in accordance with the Legal Agreements Policy and Procedure and the Delegations Register.

(82) An executed copy of the legal agreement must be lodged on the University eCentre via the Memorandum of Understanding, Contracts and Agreements eform.

(83) For low value procurement below $200,000 the University's terms and conditions are specified in the Purchase Order (PO) and are deemed to have been accepted by the supplier upon receipt of the PO.

Extension of Legal Agreements

(84) A supply legal agreement may be extended if the combined initial term and subsequent extension does not exceed seven years in total (for example, an initial five-year term contract followed by a 2-year extension).

(85) A supply legal agreement cannot be extended beyond seven years without undertaking an open and competitive market approach.

(86) Where a legal agreement is being extended within the original tender scope (for example, an initial term of five years with renewal options for up to two years) the agreement may be extended without approval from the Procurement Steering Group.

(87) A legal agreement extension must detail how the supplier was originally engaged, their performance during the initial agreement term, any risks associated with the agreement extension and how the identified risks will be managed.

(88) Legal agreement extension requests must be endorsed by a Senior Executive Team (SET) member and approved by the Procurement Steering Group.

(89) Following approval, the resulting legal agreement must be reviewed by CDU Legal in accordance with the Legal

Agreements Policy and Procedure.

Standing Exemptions

(90) Exemptions may be used to provide flexibility for sourcing of goods and/or services where it may not be practical or possible to seek quotations or test the market. A full list of exempt goods or services is listed in the Procurement Policy.

(91) Purchases for these items can be made by creating a Purchase Requisition, selecting the exempt reason in the justification section of the requisition and obtaining the delegate's approval.

Section 5 - General Procedures

Supplier Creation and Maintenance

(92) Where a purchase order is required, and the supplier is new, the supplier account must first be set up in OneFinance.

(93) To request the creation of a new Supplier, a Supplier or Non-Supplier Request form must be completed and uploaded to OneFinance.

(94) The supplier or requestor may contact payables@cdu.edu.au requesting an amendment to the supplier or non-supplier record in OneFinance.

(95) The payables team will check the request and, after being satisfied of all relevant details, enter/amend the supplier record in OneFinance and advise the requester through email.

(96) It is not possible to process an invoice in OneFinance without raising a purchase requirement/order.

Procure to Pay Processes

(97) All purchases must be processed via a Purchase Requisition through OneFinance. Only employees that have undergone appropriate training and have been set up as requisitioners can create Purchase Requisitions. To receive training and be set up as a requisitioner, visit eCentre.

(98) Purchase requisitions must be accompanied by relevant documentary evidence for quotations, awarded tender contracts or approved Alternative Procurement Method where appropriate.

(99) Purchase requisitions are required to be approved by the financial delegate in charge of the work unit. Once approved, the purchase requisition is converted into a Purchase Order, which can be sent to the supplier.

(100) The Purchase Order contains the standard terms and conditions that CDU operates within when entering into a transaction with the supplier.

(101) Under no circumstances should an invoice be processed in OneFinance before raising a purchase requisition/order.

Blanket Orders

(102) For transactions that are periodic in nature or where annual legal agreements are in place, a Blanket Order must be created. This allows multiple invoices to be receipted against a single Purchase Order, streamlining payment processing.

Credit Card Purchases

(103) The use of Corporate Purchasing Credit Cards is the recommended method of procurement of consumable goods and services where the individual value of those goods or services is less than $1,000.

(104) Corporate credit cards may be issued to University employees to facilitate the purchase and payment of goods and services. Employees must comply with the Corporate Credit Card Policy and Corporate Credit Card Procedure when making credit card purchases.

Section 6 - Non-Compliance

(105) Non-compliance with Governance documents is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct - Employees or the Code of Conduct – Students, as applicable, and is treated seriously by the University. Reports of concerns about non-compliance will be managed in accordance with the applicable disciplinary procedures outlined in the Charles Darwin University and Union Enterprise Agreement 2025 and the Code of Conduct – Students.

(106) Complaints may be raised in accordance with the Complaints and Grievance Policy and Procedure - Employees and Complaints Policy - Students.

(107) All staff members have an individual responsibility to raise any suspicion, allegation or report of fraud or corruption in accordance with the Fraud and Corruption Control Policy and Whistleblower Reporting (Improper Conduct) Procedure.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	7th August 2026
Review Date	4th April 2028
Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	6th August 2026
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Bryce Dorrian Chief Financial Officer
Implementation Officer	Jennifer Desamito Associate Director Finance
Enquiries Contact	Jennifer Desamito Associate Director Finance Procurement

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Governance document" - means policy or procedure published in the Governance Document Library. Policies and procedures are collectively called ‘governance documents’ and are often referred to as ‘policy’ or ‘University policy’.