

Invitation to Tender – Print services

31th March 2025

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) is an independent charity dedicated to breaking the link between family income and educational achievement, by providing schools with evidence on effective practice to support educational attainment. To achieve this, we synthesise and commission robust research evidence on educational practice. To date we have funded over 200 large-scale randomised control trials (RCTs) involving more than 14,000 schools, nurseries and colleges. We then work to disseminate this evidence to ensure impact. 70% of school leaders say they use EEF evidence to inform their decision-making.

The EEF was established as a registered charity in 2011 with a founding grant of £125 million from the Department for Education, to be expended within 15 years on its grant-making and other activities. In addition to generating investment returns on this endowment, the EEF actively seeks to partner with other funders to help extend the reach of its work. In 2022, the EEF was granted a further £137m by the Department for Education to re-endow the organisation and enable its continuing work for at least a further decade.

EEF Mission Statement

Giving every child – whatever their socio-economic background or where they go to school – access to great teaching is one of the most powerful levers we have for change. Using evidence – looking at what has and hasn't worked in the past – puts us in a great position to do this.

We support schools, nurseries and colleges to improve teaching and learning for two – 19-year-olds through better use of evidence.

We warmly encourage suppliers of all sizes and diverse ownership to submit their proposal in response to this invitation to tender, which:

- Sets out the overall timetable and process for the procurement of tenders.
- Provides tenderers with sufficient information to enable them to submit a compliant tender.
- Sets out the award criteria and the tender evaluation model that will be used to evaluate the tenders.
- Explains the administrative arrangements for the receipt of tenders.

Purpose and scope

We are seeking to appoint a company to provide print, storage and distribution services.

The EEF produces a range of printed materials, including but not limited to, 10–50-page guides and reports, certificates acknowledging schools participating in our funded projects, and merchandise, including pens, lanyards, and roller banners. We are looking for a company to work with our digital agency to print these materials, store them and then distribute them on request to our network of [Research Schools](#) around the country, as well as occasionally to other parties.

The appointed company will need to work with the EEF's Evidence Mobilisation team to organise deliveries to our network of [Research Schools](#).

Value of the contract

We expect the cost of these services to amount to approximately £50,000 per year + VAT.

Contract Term

The contract term is expected to be three years from August 2025 to July 2028.

Timeline

This procurement will follow a clear, structured and transparent process to ensure a fair and level playing field is maintained at all times, and that all Tenderers are treated equally.

The key dates for this procurement are currently anticipated to be as follows:

- Tender opening: 31st March 2025
- Deadline for requesting clarifications: 25th April 2025
- Target deadline for responding to requests for clarification: 7th May 2025
- Close of tender: 16th May 2025
- Reference checks: Late May 2025
- Evaluation of tenders: Late May 2025
- Decision shared: By 6th June 2025
- Due diligence: Early June 2025
- Communication of due diligence outcome: by 20th June 2025
- Contract to start: 4th August 2025

Contract award

The EEF may award the contract on the basis of a tender submitted in accordance with the instructions below.

The contract award is subject to the formal approval process of the EEF. Until all necessary approvals are obtained, all due diligence checks satisfactorily completed and the standstill period completed, no contract will be entered into.

Once the EEF has reached a decision in respect of a contract award, it will notify all tenderers of that decision and provide for a standstill period before entering into any contract.

Tender Completion Information

All documents comprising the tender must be completed and sent to procurement@eefoundation.org.uk by 16th May 2025 (the "Deadline") using reference '**Print services 2025**'.

The following requirements must be adhered to when submitting Tenders:

- The pages of the tender documents must be numbered sequentially as "Page [x] of [xx]" and include the date and title of the document on each page of the main body.
- Any additional pre-existing material which is necessary to support the tender should be included as schedules with cross-references to this material in the main body of the tender. Cross-references to this tender should also be included in the tender whenever this is relevant.
- Each tender must be uniquely named or referenced.
- A table of contents must be provided.
- A list of supporting material must be supplied.
- Two references including names and number to be contacted in late-May 2025
- EDI and Sustainability policy

The tender must be clear, concise and complete. The EEF reserves the right to mark a tenderer down or exclude them from the procurement if its tender contains any ambiguities, caveats or lacks clarity. Tenderers should submit only such information as is necessary to respond effectively to this ITT. Tenders will be evaluated on the basis of information submitted by the Deadline.

Submission of Tenders

Each tenderer must submit one tender. The tender must meet the EEF's minimum requirements, operate as a standalone tender and not be dependent on any other tender or any other factors external to the tender itself. That is, the tender must be capable of being accepted by the EEF in its own right.

Contract terms

The EEF is open to tenderers using their own form of contract. Terms that will/won't be acceptable to EEF are as follows:

1. We expect a price per unit structure for the services. We expect the value of the contract to be in the region of £50,000 + VAT per academic year (September - August).
2. Additional expenses expected (if any) to be agreed in advance.
3. Data protection and security: we expect you to have high standards of security over personal data in place.
4. Confidentiality clause to be included in the terms.
5. Use of third parties or subcontractors: we expect to have these agreed in advance of us signing the terms and that consent by the EEF to use third parties is sought first.
6. Termination clause: termination by either party to be possible with 1 month notice maximum.

Clarifications about the services or ITT

- Any clarifications relating to this ITT must be submitted to procurement@eefoundation.org.uk by 25th April 2025. The EEF will respond to all reasonable queries as soon as possible and no later than 7th May 2025. All queries and responses will be dealt with by email only. If a tenderer wishes the EEF to treat a clarification as confidential and not issue the response to all tenderers, it must state this when submitting the clarification. If, in the opinion of the EEF, the clarification is not confidential, the EEF will inform the tenderer and it will have an opportunity to withdraw it. If the clarification is not withdrawn, the response will be issued to all tenderers.
- The deadline for receipt of clarifications relating to the services or this ITT is set out above.
- Tenderers are advised not to rely on communications from the EEF in respect of the services or ITT unless they are made in accordance with these instructions.

Expected output in tender proposal

The proposal submitted should include the following criteria which will be used to evaluate the tender submission:

- Full details of your company and range of services provided. This should include print cost per unit for different types of products (see page 6)
- Experience of providing print and distribution services
- Desirable: experience of providing print and distribution services in the education sector
- Details of two organisations who can be contacted for references if required. This should include:
 - Working with third parties (i.e. external design agencies) to provide print services
 - Details of necessary skills
- Details of how your company ensures the delivery of a quality service including:
 - The service level for responding to enquiries
 - The quality of goods (both printed guides/ reports and printed merchandise)
 - The storage of documents/ merchandise
 - The timely delivery of documents/ merchandise
 - The accuracy and ease of the invoicing process

- Details of your overall approach to printing and distribution
- Details of your lead times for different services (e.g. printing documents, merchandise, etc.)
- An outline of your policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and your sustainability approach.
- Any other relevant information

Criteria

Any contract awarded as a result of this procurement will be awarded on the basis of the offer that best aligns the criteria outlined below. The Award Criteria (**Award Criteria**) are:

- Value for money (50% of application score). This includes:
 - Print per unit cost
 - Quality of printed resources
 - Quality of merchandise products
- Service level/ experience (50% of application score). This includes:
 - Response time to orders/ questions & flexibility of service
 - Support for deliveries
 - Volume of storage for stock

Scores are arrived at following the application of the Evaluation Criteria set out below to the tenderer's tender.

Tenderers are required to submit a tender strictly in accordance with the requirements set out in this ITT, to ensure the EEF has the correct information to make the evaluation. Evasive, unclear or hedged tenders may be discounted in evaluation and may, at the EEF's discretion, be taken as a rejection by the EEF of the terms set out in this ITT.

The Tender Evaluation Model showing the Evaluation Criteria and the maximum scores attributable to them is set out below.

The method of scoring the quality evaluation questions will be in accordance with the following 6 point scale. The evaluation panel will use this to assign a score to each evaluation question response, which, following the group consensus marking, will then be multiplied by the respective question weighting to produce a weighted score for each evaluation question. Once the weighting to individual question responses have been applied the weighted scores will be added together to determine a final score out of 100.

In general terms, scores will be awarded that correspond with the descriptor for the relevant score, quality evaluation responses will score higher where they answer the question in full, address all the criteria within the question and are supported by contextual evidence to demonstrate knowledge, experience, capability, and/or capacity relevant to the award criteria. Lower scores will be given where the question has not been answered in full, all the criteria have not been satisfactorily addressed, and/or there is not relevant evidence to support the response leading the evaluation panel to identify omissions or concerns that could represent a risk to the delivery of the requirement as specified.

Scoring Scale

Assessment	Marks (%)	Criteria
Excellent	100% of available marks	<p>The response answers the question in full, successfully meets all the criteria, and presents proposals that exceed or enhance the EEF's requirement.</p> <p>Full and relevant evidence is provided to enhance the response.</p> <p>Demonstrates a comprehensive level of knowledge, experience, capability, or capacity and demonstrates that the Potential Provider can meet the requirement in full and to a high standard.</p>
Good	80% of available marks	<p>The response answers the question in full and successfully meets all the criteria.</p> <p>Full and relevant evidence is provided to support the response.</p> <p>Demonstrates a good level of knowledge, experience, capability, or capacity and no concerns or omissions are identified.</p>
Satisfactory	60% of available marks	<p>The response answers the question and meets the criteria to a satisfactory standard but may lack some clarity or detail in how the proposed solutions will be achieved.</p> <p>Relevant evidence is provided to support the response. Lack of clarity and any missing evidence or detail is only minor.</p> <p>Demonstrates a satisfactory level of knowledge, experience, capability, or capacity and any concerns or omissions are not considered to represent a risk or could be reasonably resolved.</p>
Poor	40% of available marks	<p>The response does not answer the question in full and either satisfies only some of the criteria or exhibits omissions regarding meeting the criteria.</p> <p>Some evidence is provided to support the response but is lacking in sufficient detail in one or more areas.</p> <p>Demonstrates a lack of knowledge, experience, capability, or capacity and presents concerns or omissions that are considered to represent a risk or would have an impact on service delivery that would require significant external intervention to manage or resolve.</p>
Very Poor	20% of available marks	<p>The response does not answer the question and either fails to meet a number of criteria or exhibits clear and significant omissions with regard to meeting the criteria.</p> <p>Inadequate or no supporting evidence has been provided to support the response.</p> <p>Demonstrates a lack of knowledge, experience, capability, or capacity and presents significant concerns or omissions that are considered to represent an unacceptable level of risk and/or would have a detrimental impact on service delivery.</p>
Unacceptable	0% of available marks	<p>The response is absent or incomplete and/or the proposals are not relevant to the EEF's requirements. The response does not meet the EEF's requirements.</p>

Evaluation Criteria

Value for money	
1. Print per unit cost. This should include: A) Printed guides/ reports (normally 10-50 pages long. See here for example) B) Merchandise (pens, lanyards, roller banners)	Scored out of 40
2. Quality of printed resources (guides/ reports normally of 10-50 pages)	Scored out of 15
3. Quality of merchandise products (e.g. pens, lanyards, roller banners)	Scored out of 15

Service level/ experience	
4. Response time to orders & questions and flexibility of service	Scored out of 10
5. Support for the delivery of printed guides and merchandise (e.g. clarity over delivery times; communication over delivery arrangements)	Scored out of 10
6. Volume of storage of stock	Scored out of 10

OVERALL SCORE (Value of money criteria + Service level/ experience criteria)	Scored out of 100
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Mandatory criteria (pass/fail)

The provider tendering must meet the criteria for EDI and sustainability and the other regulations that are stated below in their proposal to pass and proceed further.

- EDI compliant
- Equality Act 2010
- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Worker Protection Act 2023
- Human Rights Act 1998

Comply with the following regulations:

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Bribery Act 2010
- The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015
- Sustainability:

Indication of when you may reach net zero and positive steps that you are making within your operations to improve on the carbon footprint.

Clarifications about the contents of a tender

The EEF reserves the right (but is not obliged) to seek clarification of any aspect of a tenderer's tender during the evaluation phase where necessary for the purposes of carrying out a fair evaluation. Tenderers are asked to respond to such requests promptly. Vague answers are likely to score poorly or render the tender non-compliant.

Disclaimer

While the information contained in this ITT is believed to be correct at the time of issue, neither the EEF, its advisors, nor any other awarding authorities will accept any liability for its accuracy, adequacy, or completeness, nor will any express or implied warranty be given. This exclusion extends to liability in relation to any statement, opinion or conclusion contained in or any omission from, this ITT (including its appendices) and in respect of any other written or oral communication transmitted (or otherwise made available) to any tenderer. This exclusion does not extend to any fraudulent misrepresentation made by or on behalf of the EEF.

If a tenderer proposes to enter into a contract with the EEF, it must rely on its own enquiries and on the terms and conditions set out in the contract (as and when finally executed), subject to the limitations and restrictions specified in it.

Neither the issue of this ITT, nor any of the information presented in it, should be regarded as a commitment or representation on the part of the EEF (or any other person) to enter into a contractual arrangement. Although it is intended that the remainder of this process will take place in accordance with the timetable set out in this document, the EEF reserves the right to terminate, amend or vary the procurement process at any time.

Confidentiality

All information supplied by the EEF to tenderers (including this ITT and all other documents relating to the procurement), whether in writing or orally, is supplied on condition that it (including the fact that the tenderer has received this ITT) be kept confidential by the tenderer; it must not be copied, reproduced, distributed or passed to any other person at any time (except to professional advisors, consortium members or subcontractors for the sole purpose of enabling the tenderer to submit a tender) unless the information is already in the public domain.

Tenderer conduct and conflicts of interest

Any attempt by tenderers or their advisors to influence the contract award process in any way may result in the Tenderer being disqualified. Specifically, tenderers shall not directly or indirectly at any time:

- Devise or amend the content of their tender in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person, other than in good faith with a person who is a proposed partner, supplier, consortium member or provider of finance.
- Enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person as to the form or content of any other tender or offer to pay any sum of money or valuable consideration to any person to effect changes to the form or content of any other tender.
- Enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person that has the effect of prohibiting or excluding that person from submitting a tender.
- Canvass the EEF or any employees or agents of the EEF in relation to this procurement.
- Offer, promise or give any person working for or engaged by the EEF a financial or other advantage as an inducement or reward for any improper performance of a function or activity relating to this procurement.
- Attempt to obtain information from any of the employees or agents of the EEF or their advisors concerning another tenderer or tender.

Tenderers are responsible for ensuring that no direct or indirect conflicts of interest exist (whether personal, financial or otherwise) between the tenderer, its employees and advisors, and the EEF, its employees and advisors. Tenderers must prevent, identify and remedy any conflicts of interest within their group structures and within consortium or subcontracting arrangements which may result in any distortion of competition. Any tenderer who fails to comply with these requirements may be disqualified from the procurement at the discretion of the EEF.

The EEF's rights

The EEF reserves the right to:

- Waive or change the requirements of this ITT from time to time without prior (or any) notice being given by the EEF.
- Seek clarification in respect of any part of a tenderer's submission.
- Request tenderers to submit, supplement, clarify or complete relevant information or documentation where it appears to be incomplete, erroneous or missing.
- Disqualify any tenderer that does not submit a compliant tender in accordance with the instructions in this invitation to tender.
- Disqualify any tenderer that is guilty of serious misrepresentation or of negligently providing misleading information in relation to its tender, expression of interest, the SQ or the tender process.
- Reject a tender that is abnormally low.
- Not award a contract to the tenderer submitting the most economically advantageous tender where it has established that the tender does not comply with applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social and labour law established by national law.
- Withdraw this invitation to tender at any time, or to re-invite tenders on the same or any alternative basis.
- Choose not to award any contract as a result of the current procurement process or to abandon that process.
- Make whatever changes it sees fit to the timetable, structure or content of the procurement process, depending on approvals processes or for any other reason.

Tender costs

The EEF will not be liable for any tender costs, expenditure, work or effort incurred by a tenderer in proceeding with or participating in this procurement, including if the procurement process is terminated or amended by the EEF.

EEF personnel involved in the appointment of the contract

Adil Morrison, Hilary Cornwell & Matt George

Contact email: procurement@eefoundation.org.uk

Our website is: www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk