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Appointment of Procurement Operations Officers in the Schools Procurement Unit

1. Introduction

Two vacancies exist for full time Procurement Operations Officers in the Schools Procurement Unit (SPU). The SPU is the central support resource for providing guidance to all primary and post-primary schools (excluding ETB schools) on any procurement related issue. It provides practical advice and help to schools on how to improve their procurement processes and practices on an ongoing basis. It communicates clearly with school personnel, assisting them to access contracts for goods and services which have been negotiated centrally on behalf of schools. The SPU also produces practical guides and regular newsletters to enable schools to meet their obligations under public procurement law, within a complex and changing public procurement environment.

The office of the SPU is based in the JMB/Secretariat of Secondary Schools and grant funded by the Department of Education (DE). The Secretariat of Secondary Schools (SSS) is the employer of SPU personnel, and the SPU Director and staff are answerable to the JMB General Secretary in relation to the day-to-day decision making and running of the unit. The Procurement Operations Officers will be based in the Secretariat of Secondary Schools at Emmet House, Milltown, Dublin 14 and he/she will have access to a hybrid/remote working model subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

2. Role Profile of the SPU Procurement Operations Officer

The Role

Attracting individuals with potential and ambition to embrace new challenges is crucial to the SPU's success. We are looking for talented, hard-working and commercially aware individuals who wish to develop a career in public procurement. You will have a role in assisting and advising schools in sourcing goods and services. You will have the opportunity to work on a variety of school-focused procurement projects with a wide range of schools and education sector stakeholders.

You will have access to on-the-job learning, accredited training, and other supports to enable you to develop and enhance your professional procurement competencies and skills.

The overall purpose of the role is to:

- Assist and advise in conducting public procurement tenders ensuring that client schools' needs are met, and the obligations to Public Procurement Regulations and Policy are adhered to;
- Establishing close working relationships with client schools to understand and assess their requirements;
- Assist with the effective management of school-focused projects; and
- Procurement Operations Officer(s) may be assigned to sourcing operations and quality management on behalf of the school sector.

Reporting Relationship

The Procurement Operations Officer reports to the Procurement Operations Manager and the SPU Director and will be working as part of a team.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

The Procurement Operations Officer will work as a member of SPU's Operations Team and will be required to:

- Assist and advise in the conducting of public procurement competitions by schools to ensure that they are compliant with all legal and policy requirements;
- Establish close working relationships with client schools to understand and assess their requirements;
- Assist and advise in the preparation of tender documentation, ancillary documentation and reports, including evaluation reports, project completion reports and notification of outcome letters;
- Ensure that all process, procedures, and quality management steps are adhered to;
- Ensure all competition files are accurate and up to date;
- Ensure that data is accurately completed and recorded on systems including on the SPU's SharePoint and CRM workflow management system.
- Report on project progressions, timelines and deliverables ensuring that all information is correctly recorded in a timely fashion.

The above is intended as a guide to the general range of duties and is intended to be neither definitive nor restrictive. It will be subject to periodic review with the post holder.

3. Entry Requirements

Essential:

Candidates must,

On or before 1st September 2023

- (i) Have obtained in the Leaving Certificate examination a minimum of Grade C in at least five subjects at Higher level; **or**
- (ii) Hold a qualification, that in the opinion of the Secretariat of Secondary Schools (SSS), is of a standard in terms of both level and volume of learning that is of at least equivalent or higher standard to the Leaving Certificate (this will only be determined during the selection process or if a candidate comes under consideration for a position); **or**
- (iii) Have obtained a recognised degree, minimum level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ); **or**

- (iv) Have experience in procurement/purchasing, or buyer role in the public/private sector (minimum of 12 continuous months within the last 5 years, where the primary duties and responsibilities of the role have been specifically related to procurement).

and

- (a) Have experience of operating successfully in a team environment;
- (b) Have relevant procurement experience, **OR** have specialist knowledge, expertise or self-development which demonstrates suitability for a role in procurement;
- (c) Excellent IT skills;
- (d) Excellent communication and interpersonal skills;
- (e) An ability to work on their own initiative; and
- (f) Proficiency in the Irish Language would be of advantage for this position.

In addition to the above, candidates must also be able to demonstrate the Key Competencies identified for effective performance at this level (see table below)

Key Competencies

SPU Procurement Operations Officer
People Management/Teamworking
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consults and encourages the full engagement of the team, encouraging open and constructive discussions around work issues; • Gets the best out of individuals and the team, encouraging good performance and addressing any performance issues that may arise; • Values and supports the development of others and the team; • Encourages and supports new and more effective ways of working; • Deals with tensions within the team in a constructive fashion; • Encourages, listens to and acts on feedback from the team to make improvements; • Actively shares information, knowledge and expertise to help the team to meet it's objectives.
Analysis & Decision Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively deals with a wide range of information sources, investigating all relevant issues; • Understands the practical implication of information in relation to the broader context in which s/he works – procedures, divisional objectives etc.; • Identifies and understands key issues and trends; • Correctly extracts & interprets numerical information, conducting accurate numerical calculations; • Draws accurate conclusions & makes balanced and fair recommendations backed up with evidence.

Delivery of Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes ownership of tasks and is determined to see them through to a satisfactory conclusion; • Is logical and pragmatic in approach, setting objectives and delivering the best possible results with the resources available through effective prioritisation; • Constructively challenges existing approaches to improve efficient client service delivery; • Accurately estimates time parameters for project, making contingencies to overcome obstacles; • Minimises errors, reviewing learning and ensuring remedies are in place; • Maximises the input of own team in ensuring effective delivery of results; • Ensures proper service delivery procedures/protocols/reviews are in place and implemented.
Interpersonal & Communication Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifies communication approach to suit the needs of a situation/audience; • Actively listens to the views of others; • Liaises with other groups to gain co-operation; • Negotiates, where necessary, in order to reach a satisfactory outcome; • Maintains a focus on dealing with clients in an effective, efficient and respectful manner; • Is assertive and professional when dealing with challenging issues; • Expresses self in a clear and articulate manner when speaking and in writing.
Drive and Commitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is committed to the role, consistently striving to perform at a high level; • Demonstrates flexibility and openness to change; • Is resilient and perseveres to obtain objectives despite obstacles or setbacks; • Ensures that client service is at the heart of own/team work; • Is personally honest and trustworthy; • Acts with integrity and encourages this in others.
Specialist Knowledge, Expertise and Self Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays high levels of skills/ expertise in own area and provides guidance to colleagues; • Has a clear understanding of the role, objectives and targets and how they support the service delivered by the Unit and Department and can communicate this to the team; • Leads by example, demonstrating the importance of development by setting time aside for development initiatives for self and the team.

Desirable:

- Have an awareness of EU Procurement Directives and the Irish Public Sector procurement environment.
- Have experience of operating in a regulated environment

The working conditions attached to the post of SPU Procurement Operations Officer are as follows:

- Appointment commences in September/October 2023;

- Contract will be for a three-year fixed term in the first instance;
- Probation for six months with the possibility of an extension of this period;
- A secondment arrangement may be considered;
- The salary will be set at the level of Executive Officer in the in the Civil Service. The current annual pay scale is **€33,812 €35,714 €36,788 €38,884 €40,763 €42,580 €44,391 €46,164 €47,955 €49,696 €51,492 €52,692 €54,403¹ €56,127²**

¹ After 3 years satisfactory service at the maximum.

² After 6 years satisfactory service at the maximum.

Entry above the minimum is permitted depending on depth of previous experience demonstrated.

- No pension entitlements other than voluntary access to PRSA;
- The work base will be the JMB Secretariat in Emmet House;
- Working day will be **9.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.** and
- Opportunities to avail of further training will be provided.

Application forms and other documentation related to the post are available to download from www.jmb.ie

European Economic Area Nationals

Candidates should note that eligibility to compete is open to citizens of the European Economic Area (EEA). The EEA consists of the Member States of the European Union along with Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway. The eligibility to compete is also open to Swiss citizens pursuant to the agreement between the EU and Switzerland on the free movement of persons. To qualify, candidates must be citizens of the EEA or Switzerland by the date of any job offer.

Completed application forms must be emailed to corporateservices@jmb.ie to arrive no later than 31st August 2023. Late applications will not be accepted.

The JMB reserves the right to arrange more than one interview as part of the recruitment process. Shortlisting may apply. The Secretariat of Secondary Schools is an equal opportunities employer.

