



Purchasing

Policy FI004

Volume 7, Finance and Fiscal Management

Responsible Administrator: Treasurer and Vice President for Finance and Administration

Responsible Office: Finance and Administration

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Policy Statement

This policy describes the functions and activities of FIT's Purchasing Department, which serves the college community through the procurement of goods and services, in compliance with FIT's policies and procedures, consistent with the highest standards of ethical and responsible business practices.

Reason for the Policy

The policy establishes the processes, standards, and expectations associated with the procurement of goods and services for FIT. The FIT Board of Trustees, the governing body of the college, is committed to establishing administrative policies for FIT that keeps the college in compliance with all applicable laws and rules, including those regarding purchasing practices. In keeping with the college's commitment, FIT's Purchasing Department subscribes to the NYS Public Officers Law, Section 74 Code of Ethics.

Who is Responsible for this Policy

- Purchasing Department

Who is Affected by this Policy

- All FIT employees

Definitions

- **Bid:** An offer to buy goods or provide services at a specified price and in a specified time period.
- **Blanket Purchase Orders:** A Purchase Order issued to a named supplier to reflect authorization for a User Department to purchase identified items or services from that supplier over a period of time where precise quantities to be purchased are not known in advance but the description and the unit price of the item(s) or service(s) are already established by agreement or Bid.
- **Contractor:** Any individual, business, vendor, or other legal entity awarded a contract to furnish commodities or services for an agreed price.
- **Formal Bid:** One that is publicly advertised and asks for sealed Bids that are publicly opened at the time and place specified in the solicitation.

- **Invoice:** A document detailing the goods or services delivered and the amount due to the vendor. Invoices are submitted to Accounts Payable, which reviews all related documentation to confirm delivery, verify that payment is proper, and ensure timely payment while taking advantage of available cash discounts.
- **Invitation for Bid (IFB):** An IFB is a formal request to Contractors/Vendors to submit a Bid for a clearly defined project scope, requirements, and qualifications, or products.
- **Purchase Order (PO):** A Purchase Order is a formal, legally binding document issued by FIT to a supplier, specifying the details of a purchase, including the quantity, price, and terms of delivery for goods or services.
- **Purchase Requisition (PR):** A Purchase Requisition is an internal document from a User Department to the Purchasing Department used to request the procurement of goods or services. It serves as a formal request for approval before a Purchase Order is issued to a supplier.
- **Request For Quote (RFQ):** A short form sent by the Purchasing Department to several vendors asking for informal quotes for goods or services.
- **Request For Proposal (RFP):** A competitive solicitation seeking proposals for a specified service or technology, pursuant to which an award is made to the responsive and responsible proposer(s) offering the best value.
- **Sole Source:** A procurement in which only one vendor is capable of supplying the required commodities or services.
- **Single Source:** A procurement process where multiple vendors can provide the needed goods or services, but the college chooses one vendor for specific, well-documented reasons. The decision must be justified in writing, explaining why that vendor was selected, what alternatives were considered, and why the cost is reasonable.
- **User Department:** The requisitioning department.
- **Voucher:** A request for payment submitted directly to the Accounting Department without requiring an associated Purchase Order.

Principles

FIT purchasing activities are governed by the State University of New York (SUNY) procurement policies and procedures. All procurement decisions must comply with SUNY's established purchasing thresholds, competitive bidding requirements, and use of approved vendors and contracts.

- **Centralized Procurement**
 - The Purchasing Department is solely authorized to conduct procurement processes on behalf of FIT. Purchases made without prior authorization from the Purchasing

Department are not eligible for reimbursement by FIT and are the financial responsibility of the individual.

- Only specific individuals (e.g., President, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Controller, Purchasing Director, or their designees) can sign and approve Purchase Orders. No other staff or faculty member has the authority to make purchases or commitments on behalf of FIT.
- The Purchasing Department is the first point of contact before beginning the purchasing process. All employees should familiarize themselves with the procedures in this document prior to contacting the Purchasing Department via email purchasing@fitnyc.edu.

- **Purchasing Objectives**

The Purchasing Department prioritizes obtaining the best value, maintaining quality, and conducting business with responsible suppliers in an open and competitive manner to ensure the prudent and economical use of public money and to facilitate the acquisitions of facilities, goods, and services at the lowest possible cost.

- **Authorized Purchases**

- All purchases must serve official college purposes, align with the college's or department's budget, and comply with applicable laws and FIT policies.

- **Unauthorized Purchases**

The following purchases are not authorized purchases using tax-derived funds:

- The Purchasing Department cannot procure items for personal use (such as alcohol or travel insurance, etc.) or negotiate employee discounts. For a full list of non-reimbursable expenses, see FIT's guidance on Non-Allowable Expenditures. Additionally, employees are prohibited from using FIT vendors for personal purchases or referencing FIT accounts, shipping points, or billing addresses.
- Attempted deliveries without an authorized Purchase Order will be rejected.
- Purchase Orders are not used to pay employees of the college for rendering personal/professional services outside of their general employment responsibilities.

- **Diversity and Inclusion**

- FIT takes affirmative action to engage New York State Certified Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) and Disabled Veteran Businesses, ensuring equal opportunity in procurement activities. Suppliers must adhere to non-discrimination policies in accordance with applicable laws.

- **Conflict of Interest**

- All procurement activities must avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest. (See FIT's Employee Code of Ethical Conduct and FIT's Whistleblower policy in the Related Policies section for more information on Conflicts of Interest.)
- Employees must disclose any potential or actual conflicts to the Purchasing Director, who will ensure impartiality in vendor selection.

- **Emergency Purchases**

- Emergency Purchases may only be made by the President, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Controller, Purchasing Director, or their designees.

- To qualify as a true emergency the situation must:
 - result from an accident or unforeseen condition; or
 - impact FIT property, buildings, or the life, health, safety, or property of the FIT community; or
 - require immediate action that cannot wait for competitive bidding.
 - Emergency purchases must not exceed the immediate needs of the emergency. For ongoing needs, normal competitive procedures must be used.
- **Budgeting and Evaluating Requirements**
 - User Departments are responsible for evaluating and specifying requirements for purchases; obtaining proper authorizations; and must coordinate their PRs with FIT's budget and budget cycle.
 - **Procurement Thresholds**
 - **Purchases up to \$10,000:** At least three quotes must be obtained and documented.
 - **Purchases between \$10,000 and \$50,000:** Must go through the RFQ process.
 - **Purchases above \$50,000:** Must go through the IFB or RFP process, resulting in a Formal Bid.
 - See *Procedures* section below for more detail on these Procurement Thresholds.
 - **Recordkeeping**
 - The Purchasing Department maintains complete records for procurement activities (for example, POs, PRs, vendor information, and W9s), ensuring accountability, transparency, and compliance with record-retention requirements.
 - User Departments should maintain fully executed contracts in accordance with records-retention requirements (See FIT's Record Retention and Disposition policy under Related Policies).
 - **Vendor Relations**
 - Contact with vendors by User Departments is limited to price inquiries and general information.
 - Users are not authorized to bind the college to any specific purchase or purchasing terms.
 - **Certificate of Liability Insurance**
 - Before starting work at FIT or FIT's leased properties, **all vendors** must submit Certificates of Liability Insurance (COI) and receive approval from FIT and/or the leased building management regardless of how the work order is requested.
 - **Exceptions:**
 - Student clubs are subject to the college's Purchasing policy and procedures. However, it is recognized that unique circumstances related to student club activities may not always align with standard purchasing timelines. In such instances, student clubs must contact the Purchasing Department at the earliest opportunity to obtain guidance and ensure compliance with applicable purchasing requirements.

Responsibilities

- **Purchasing Department**
 - Serves as FIT's liaison with vendors to secure quality goods and services promptly and cost-effectively.
 - Guides User Departments through a series of questions that will help identify important criteria to determine purchasing options including, but not limited to:
 - Sole or Single Source;
 - Vouchers;
 - existing contracts/renewals;
 - RFPs (Request for Proposal);
 - RFQs (Request for Quote); and
 - IFBs (Invitation for Bid).
 - Assists with obtaining proper documentation for Sole or Single Source purchases.
 - Determines which reviews are required beyond the Purchasing Department to ensure other approvals are received prior to purchasing; advises User Departments on required approvals.
 - Develops specifications, negotiates contracts, and maintains accurate procurement records.
 - Advises User Departments on marketplace availability and pricing.
 - Ensures the needs of the college are met without a conflict of interest.
 - Seeks to utilize existing government contracts (New York City, New York State, Federal Government) whenever possible.

- **User Departments**
 - Evaluate and specify requirements, ensure proper budget authorization, and align requisitions with the FIT budget cycle.
 - Communicate purchasing requirements with the Purchasing Department promptly to allow adequate time for approvals, ensuring that needs are met efficiently and cost-effectively.
 - Seek to utilize existing government contracts (New York City, New York State, Federal Government) whenever possible.
 - The User Department will obtain any additional approvals and provide supporting documentation to the Purchasing Department.
 - For Sole Source purchases the User Department must document the pricing and provide justification.

Procedures

- **Initiating the Purchase Process**
 - Contact the Purchasing Department prior to beginning any purchase process.
 - The Purchasing Department will help determine the appropriate purchasing process (e.g., RFP, RFQ, IFB, etc.) based on the dollar amount and the contract type.
 - The Purchasing Department will advise the User Department on what additional approvals are necessary prior to facilitating the purchase.

- **Procurement Thresholds**
 - **Purchases up to \$10,000**
 - The User Department must obtain and document at least three quotes. Quotes can be from three vendors or from online sites/catalogs.
 - Attach documentation to the Purchase Requisition (PR) and provide it to the Purchasing Department.
 - **Purchases between \$10,000 and \$50,000**
 - The Purchasing Department will issue a Request for Quote (RFQ) to at least three vendors.
 - The lowest responsive and responsible Bid will be selected.
 - **Purchases above \$50,000**
 - The Purchasing Department will conduct a Formal Bid, such as an Invitation for Bid (IFB) or Request for Proposal (RFP) process.
 - This includes public advertisement, vendor solicitation, and posting on the [FIT Purchasing Website](#).
- **Purchase Requisitions**
 - A verified, electronically approved Purchase Requisition is required before the Purchasing Department will generate a Purchase Order.
 - Purchase Requisitions are not binding and must not be used as authorization for goods or services.
 - The User Department generates the Purchase Requisition and obtains all required approvals before sending the Purchase Requisition to the Purchasing Department.
 - The Purchasing Department generates the Purchase Order. This ensures proper authorization and compliance before committing to any purchase.
- **Purchase Orders**
 - All purchases for materials or services must be approved through an official Purchase Order before any transaction occurs.
 - Vendor Invoices must be tied to an approved Purchase Order.
 - Goods or services already received cannot be retroactively covered by a Purchase Order.
 - The Purchasing Department may recommend the use of a Blanket Purchase Order that can be used throughout the fiscal year.
- **Approvals**
 - The Purchasing Department must approve purchases before a commitment is made. Certain types of purchases may also require prior review and authorization from other FIT departments, depending on the nature of the goods and services being provided.
 - The Purchasing Department will advise the User Department when additional approvals are needed, and guide them through the process before the request is submitted for final review. For example, any purchase involving hardware, software, or other technology-related items must first receive approval from the Vice President for Information Technology prior to the final review of the Purchasing Department.
 - User Departments are responsible for ensuring all required departmental approvals are obtained before submitting documentation to Purchasing. For more information about the types of purchases that require additional departmental review, and the corresponding approval areas, please see the Purchasing webpage.

- **Vouchers**
 - The Purchasing Department will assist in determining whether a Voucher or a Purchase Requisition should be used for a specific purpose and provide direction accordingly.

- **Emergency Purchases**
 - The User Department must promptly notify the Purchasing Department in writing of any situation that may require an emergency purchase, including a detailed explanation of the emergency's nature (a lack of proper planning does not constitute an emergency).
 - The Purchasing Department will document the method of selection used, suppliers contacted, and all prices quoted.
 - The Purchasing Department will facilitate the approval with the officials designated in the Principles of this policy.

- **Sales Tax Exemption**
 - FIT is exempt from State and City sales tax. Tax exemption forms are available through the Purchasing Department and must be used for all college-related purchases.

Violations

N/A

Related Policies

- [Travel and Reimbursement](#)

Related Documents

- N/A

Contacts

- **Purchasing Department**
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