

1. Background and Purpose

The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (the University) is a leading University in Africa, as reflected by its international standing and the quality of its graduates, many of whom have played a major role in founding industries in South Africa, including sectors such as mining, financial services, and information technology. The University prepares students for managerial, professional, and leadership positions in the public, private, and non-governmental sectors. The University's graduates occupy many senior positions in government and industry and have thus made a considerable contribution to the economy.

The University wishes to engage with catering service providers who can provide suitable catering and complementary goods and services across all University campuses and any other venue as required by the University. The catering offering should be fit for purpose and according to the event requirements. Grab and go items, beverages and off the menu meals must be as indicated on the approved menu. The University's catering requirements span routine operational meetings through to high-profile executive and externally facing engagements. The University therefore requires a compliant, auditable, fit-for purpose catering framework that supports service consistency, value-for-money outcomes, and risk mitigation through standardised supplier oversight.

2. Project Definition

The University is inviting proposals from experienced catering service providers (internal and external) to provide catering for functions and events both on and off campus, as well as refreshments for small meetings and call and collect drinks and snacks from onsite food retail shops. The selected catering service providers should be capable of accommodating diverse event needs, catering for internal meetings ensuring high-quality service for students, staff, and visitors.

3. Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of this tender is to engage catering providers that offer convenient, cost-effective, and consistently high-quality services to the University community. These catering service providers should be able to adapt to events of varying sizes, types, and requirements, ensuring that all catering services align with the specific needs of each event while maintaining excellence in service delivery. The University intends to list a panel of catering suppliers, as the one-size-fits-all approach is not effective, and the varying and unique requirements of the University must be taken into consideration. Catering service providers must have proven experience in corporate catering and the ability to provide a diverse and high-quality menu offering, this includes qualifying onsite food retail outlets, who should provide flexible and affordable menu offerings for students and staff functions and meetings based on available budget.

The tender aims to establish a supplier panel that enables:

- Comparative quotation sourcing (multi-supplier RFQ approach) for competitive pricing and budget control
- Improved user experience measured through post-event evaluations
- Ongoing compliance assurance through inspections, documentation reviews, and performance assessments

- A differentiated service approach across budget / standard / premium requirements in alignment with institutional needs
- The breakdown below indicates the categories of catering services providers the University is looking to appoint to provide various catering on campus:
 - Budget Catering:
 - The focus is on cost efficiency and basic service
 - The menu offering is simple, limited and often bulk purchased with minimal customisation
 - Presentation is functional, served in disposable or basic serving ware and dropped off, no waiter service required.
 - Required when events require affordability over variety or upmarket offering
 - Standard Catering:
 - The focus is a balance between quality and cost
 - Wider menu variety with some customisation, mid-range quality using fresher produce
 - Presentation is professional, not extravagant and can be served in disposable or ceramic platters, as a drop off service, or with waiter service – more attentive than budget catering options
 - Required for functions or events where a more reliable, inclusive and quality offering is required
 - Premium Catering
 - The focus is on a high-end experience and exclusivity
 - Menu options are gourmet, customised, chef curated with themed cuisines, ingredients are top-quality, can be organic in some instances, locally sourced etc
 - Presentation is elegant, creative plating, fine tableware, glassware and décor integration, mostly served by highly trained staff, full-service dining
 - Required for high profile events

4. Scope of Work & expected Deliverables

4.1 The catering service provider required include but are not limited to the following:

- A drop-off service in disposable containers and bio-degradable disposable cutlery.
- Set up in the venue and collect equipment after the event
- Set up in the venue, with assisted service
- Set up in the venue, including waiter services
- Set up the venue, provide catering, waiter, bar services and decor
- Provision of a variety of menu options, including vegetarian, Halaal, Vegan, etc, when requested.
- Morning eats for meetings, conferences, etc.
- Mid-morning and mid-afternoon refreshments and beverages (tea/coffee/ etc)
- Office/meeting catering services
- Cocktail or Canape Service – high-end and budget range
- Buffet offering: breakfast, lunch, or dinner
- Plated Sit-down executive /high-end lunches and dinners
- Working lunches
- Light Lunches, i.e., poke bowls, salad bowls, and wraps (chicken, beef, or vegetarian)
- Catering for student events and meetings
- Packed or boxed lunches
- Budget lunches, i.e., quiche & salad, chicken pie and salad or vegetables

- Platters such as tramezzini, pizza, sandwiches, wraps
- Themed or custom catering that may include a combination of the above
- Call & collect offering from qualifying retail food outlets on campus
- Off the menu meals / restaurant offering – on and off campus

4.2 End-to-End Catering Deliverables

The catering service provider must be able to deliver end-to-end services across the catering lifecycle, including:

- Menu design and nutritional planning
- Procurement and ingredient sourcing
- Food preparation and quality control
- Service delivery and on-site execution
- Event setup, breakdown, and post-event close-out

4.3 Complementary or related services as required, including but not limited to the following:

- Waiters, barmen, barristers
- Tablecloths, overlays, runners, etc
- Cutlery and crockery – as requested, bio-degradable takeaway cutlery and crockery, or cutlery and crockery as required by the event organisers
- Hot and cold holding equipment
- Condiments
- Chaffing dishes and other heating sources
- Other as required

4.4 Executive / Premium Service Protocols

For executive and externally facing events, service providers must demonstrate enhanced standards relating to: presentation, service etiquette, staffing professionalism, and guest experience management.

4.5 Service Level Expectations (minimums)

- Quotation turnaround time: within a defined period (e.g., 24–48 hours depending on event size).
- On-site setup completed before event start time as per booking confirmation.
- Delivery windows and access requirements must align to campus security controls.

4.6 Event frequency and scale

Functions and events will take place as required by the various Faculties, Departments and student bodies on campus. There is no set schedule for functions and events being hosted, and catering service providers will be contacted to provide menu options and relevant quotes as and when requested.

- Functions and events can take the form of the following, but is not limited to:
- Small – less than 50 people – departmental meetings/workshops/student meetings
- Medium -between 50 – 200 people – Lectures and networking events
- Large – more than 200 people - launch events or fundraising

Institutional / Extra-Large: events exceeding 800 guests (e.g large ceremonies, major donor/institutional events) requiring proven logistics capability and high-volume execution.

4.7 Function and Event locations

Various locations and venues on campus, the below an indication of the size of the venues:

Medium venues:

- Theatres – Seabrook Music Hall (173 pax), WITS Theatre (360 pax)
- Origins Centre (120 pax)
- Solomon Mahlangu House Senate Room (180 pax)

Large venues:

- Event catering – DIGS field, Railey Greens West Campus, Library Lawns East Campus, Hall 29, Flower Hall, Exams Hall, etc.
- Science Stadium (up to 400 pax)
- Wits Anglo American Digital Dome (200 pax)
- Wits Management Campus (WBS)

Most of these venues do not have kitchens or preparation areas, and the catering service providers must provide the service from their food premises or central production kitchens with adequate hot/cold holding and temperature controls in place. In addition to holding a valid certificate of acceptability (COA), or confirmation from the relevant City of Johannesburg Environmental Health Office that the premises comply with R638 and a certificate will be issued. Where temporary kitchens are required, the caterer must submit a method statement covering food safety controls and traceability, equipment list, staffing plan, power/water needs, and waste management approach. For executive precincts, service providers must meet enhanced presentation and service standards as defined in the service component requirements.

In certain instances, and depending on the type of event, the catering service provider will have to set up a temporary kitchen. The University will provide the required infrastructure relating to electricity and water, marquee, etc. depending on the requirements. The Caterer will provide the equipment required to provide the services as agreed on.

Refreshments for meetings will be hosted at the various departments, and the organiser will provide the exact location,

Most buildings on campus are linked to the campus generators.

4.8 Dietary requirements

Dietary requirements requested by the event organizer could include the following:

- Vegetarian
- Vegan
- Halaal
- Kosher
- Gluten-free
- Allergen management protocols (labelling, segregation, cross-contamination controls)

Capability to provide dietary-specific meals without compromising service timing or food safety requirements.

4.9 Leftover food items

The procedure to follow relating to the leftover food after the function/event must be discussed with the event organiser prior to the event. The Catering service provider must ensure that all food

safety requirements are adhered to if leftover food is left at the premises as take away for guests or staff.

Where leftovers are retained, the caterer must maintain traceability and temperature integrity and comply with food safety requirements for storage and handling in accordance with applicable regulation and the caterer's Food Safety Management System.

4.10 Performance Evaluation

- The University will implement post-event QR feedback and structured evaluations.
- Performance will be assessed through:
 1. User satisfaction and experience (quality, presentation, responsiveness, service standards)
 2. Operational efficiency and value for money (price competitiveness, turnaround times, reliability, fit-for-purpose delivery)
 3. Compliance and food safety assurance (audit outcomes, documentation, inspection results)

4.10.1 Corrective Action & Panel Consequences:

Where performance is unsatisfactory, the University may require corrective action plans, apply reduced utilisation, or suspend/remove suppliers from the panel in accordance with contract terms and governance processes.

4.11 Catering Service Provider Terms and Conditions

Terms and conditions of each catering service provider must clearly state the lead time for booking and confirming functions and events. Cancellation fees, where applicable, last-minute changes to menu offerings and number of people per event etc. This is to minimise the risk of disputes after execution of the function/event.

- A delivery note for small or office functions/drop off service must accompany the delivery, and the relevant WITS employee/organiser must sign that food was delivered according to the requirements.
- A debriefing session will be conducted for large events and all shortfalls, and areas for improvement will be listed and discussed.
- A function booking system must be implemented and signed off by both parties prior to the execution of the event, to avoid any discrepancies after delivery of the meals/service.

4.11.1 Booking Governance

The University will source quotations from one or more panel suppliers per request, based on event requirements, availability, and performance history, enabling comparative quote assessment. Suppliers must accept booking confirmations via a formal booking system and provide event order confirmations with agreed deliverables, costs, inclusions/exclusions, and service timelines.

4.11.2 Dispute Prevention / Change Control

Any changes to headcount, menu, or scope must be recorded in writing prior to execution and reflected in revised quotations where applicable.

4.12 Licenses

The University will obtain the necessary licenses as stipulated below. The catering service provider must have a Liquor License to procure and supply liquor for events where a valid events liquor license or venue liquor license is in place for events or functions.

Occasional Liquor License: This type of license is granted for specific events that cannot be covered by other license types.

Event's License: This license facilitates the legal sale and consumption of alcohol at specific venues for temporary gatherings or functions.

Where alcohol services are required, suppliers must be able to support lawful procurement/service consistent with event licensing arrangements and provide trained bar staff where required.

4.13 Payment options TO PATRONS DURING EVENTS

All payment options including but not limited to E-Cash, debit and credit cards, and mobile payment solutions (mobile wallets) must be available to patrons attending events or functions, when required. The University promotes a cashless environment; suppliers must support card and mobile wallet options where point-of-sale is required.

4.14 Security, ACCESS, and Parking

The successful catering service provider are required to follow university policies and procedures related to access and parking on campus. The successful catering suppliers must apply for ICAM cards for vehicle and staff access to the university at their own expense. ICAM cards for staff members no longer in the employ of the catering service providers must be returned to the university, and access will be cancelled. Active ICAM cards will be renewed annually.

The successful catering service provider must obtain parking permits according to university policies and procedures for each vehicle that requires access to the campus.

The Suppliers must plan logistics in line with access controls, loading windows, and security requirements to prevent event disruption.

4.15 Cleaning and Hygiene and Waste removal

The successful catering service provider is responsible for clearing their area after any event. Waste generated by the catering service provider must be disposed of in a responsible manner that aligns with the University's environmental sustainability goals. Waste must be separated into clear refuse bags and placed in the marked wheely bins inside the allocated refuse area and ensure appropriate biodegradable packaging.

Wet waste (food waste) must not be mixed with dry waste. Boxes must be flattened and placed in the allocated area for boxes.

4.16 Competencies and Expertise Required

The catering service provider is expected to employ suitably qualified staff with relevant experience. All food handlers and the person in charge must be trained by a competent person on food safety.

Detailed contact information for the catering company must be supplied to ensure communication relating to requirements for functions and events, are received and responded to timeously.

Suppliers must demonstrate appropriate staffing capacity and experience for the event types they intend to service, including high-volume and high-profile events where applicable.

4.17 COMPLIANCE

4.17.1 Occupational health, safety & environmental

All catering service providers must comply with the requirements stipulated in the Occupational Health and Safety Act 85 of 1993.

4.17.2 Food Safety

Compliance with the regulations and standards for the industry, including but not limited to the Foodstuffs, Cosmetics and Disinfectants Act 54 of 1972 (R638, R146, R908 etc.) and the SANS 10049:2019.

The University reserves the right to conduct announced or unannounced inspections and audits at supplier premises, including documentation reviews and sampling, surface and hand swabs.

Suppliers must maintain a documented Food Safety Management System and make records available on request with the Certificate of Acceptability for the production kitchen where catering will be dispatched from.

4.17.3 Certificate of acceptability (COA) for all delivery vehicles

If a new food production kitchen, proof of application and report from the relevant City Environmental Health office, must be submitted

Catering service provider must have an established Food Safety Management System implemented at their production kitchen, and relevant documentation must be kept, ensuring compliance to the R638 of 2018 General Hygiene Requirements for Food Premises, The Transport of Food and Related Matters.

Temperature monitoring must apply to the full cold and hot chain, including, but not limited to:

- Receiving / dispatch from the production kitchen
- Cooking / reheating (where applicable)
- Hot holding / cold holding prior to dispatch
- Transport (loaded and arrival temperatures)
- On-site holding (hot boxes, bains-marie, chafers, fridges)
- Service period monitoring (during service window)

The temperature control sheets must include, but not limited to:

- Event name, date, venue, and service time window
- Menu item description and batch reference
- Time, temperature reading, and monitoring frequency
- Equipment used (hot-holding / cold-holding / transport units)
- Name and signature of the responsible person (PIC)
- Corrective actions taken where temperatures fall outside acceptable ranges, including product disposition (e.g., reheat, rapid chill, discard)

In the event of alleged food illness reported after an event/function, the caterer must provide all relevant documentation relating to the food items served. Traceability exercise will be done, and food samples must be available for testing.

The following documentation must be available on request for events on campus:

- Valid vehicle and food premises certificate of acceptability
- Chef & cooks food safety training certificates and records

Requirements per event:

- Temperature control and monitoring sheets as stipulated by R638 of 2018 General Hygiene Requirements for Food Premises, The Transport of Food and Related Matters: Food Temperatures Annexure E
- Dispatch documents
- Food samples (100g) kept for 7 days at the premises of the catering service provider.
- Hygiene regulations which shall be signed by the persons in charge and food handlers.

Non-compliance with mandatory food safety requirements may constitute a material breach and may result in suspension or removal from the panel

4.17.4 Staff

Catering service provider must employ suitable trained staff and the applicable certificates, attendance registers and training records/presentations must be available on request. Training relates to food safety, OHS&E, customer service, etc. Waiter staff must have relevant experience for the type of event service required. All staff must be issued with branded uniforms and the related Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

For executive and externally facing events, waiter/service staff must demonstrate experience and appropriate service etiquette.

4.17.5 Legal

Legal compliance documents will be requested on an annual basis. These include the following: CIPC, SARS TAX clearance, COIDA, COA, applicable licenses, staff salary scales, registration with the relevant Bargaining council, BBBEE certificate or affidavit, public liability insurance, etc.

Legal and statutory compliance documents will be requested annually and upon expiry/renewal.

4.18 Procure to Pay

Purchase orders are raised, as confirmation of a quotation submitted, by the University to the Service Provider

The Service Provider will submit their Invoice after delivery of goods/services, execution of the function or the event to the person that raised the Purchase Order

Payment processed as per contract payment terms – 30 days from date of invoice

The Service Provider will ensure the University has the contact details for the Operations / Events organisers as well as the finance department to ensure clear communication for all functions.

4.19 Pricing

Pricing must be transparent and comparable with suppliers and must include:

- Per-person pricing (standard catering) .
- Package pricing (budget / standard / premium packages).
- Custom/bespoke quotes (décor, themed menus, equipment, staffing, bar service).

- Minimum spend thresholds where justified and transparently disclosed .

Mandatory standardization for evaluation:

- Bidders must submit pricing using a uniform standardized pricing schedule issued by the University.
- Quotes must clearly state inclusions/exclusions (delivery, setup, staffing, equipment, décor) and itemise dietary surcharges (Halaal/Kosher/vegan/gluten-free/allergen).
- Any annual adjustments must follow an approved escalation mechanism (e.g., CPI-linked) to prevent unpredictable pricing
- Appointment to the panel does not guarantee volume, frequency of use, or exclusivity.