

City of Toronto

Negotiated Request for Proposals (nRFP) for the Non-exclusive Supply, Delivery and Installation of Office Furniture and Task Chairs

FINAL FAIRNESS MONITOR'S REPORT

RFP Issued: December 13, 2024

RFP Deadline: January 31, 2025

Report Issued: October 27, 2025

Report Submitted to: Chief Procurement Officer

Report Submitted by: Robinson Global Management Inc.
1920 Yonge Street, Suite 200
Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4S 3E2
www.RobinsonGlobalManagement.com



October 27, 2025

Geneviève Sharkey
Chief Procurement Officer
Purchasing & Materials Management Division
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

Re: Negotiated Request for Proposals (nRFP) for the Non-exclusive Supply, Delivery and Installation of Office Furniture and Task Chairs

Dear Ms. Sharkey,

1. Background

Robinson Global Management Inc. ("RGM") was retained as the Fairness Monitor for the captioned procurement on or about November 7, 2024. Our role is to provide an assessment of the procurement process for the Non-exclusive Supply, Delivery and Installation of Office Furniture and Task Chairs, confirming that it has been carried out in a fair and objective manner. We functioned in an oversight and advisory role. As per the RFP, the selected Supplier will be requested to enter direct Contract negotiations to finalize an agreement with the City for the provision of the deliverables.

We were retained during the RFP development phase. We monitored the RFP open period in-market process as well as the evaluation process to identify the highest ranked Supplier. This letter summarizes fairness findings. Neither RGM nor the individual author of this report is responsible for any conclusions that may be drawn from this opinion. For further detail on the process, we recommend that information be sought from the City of Toronto's RFP contact directly.

We provided the deliverables as listed below, taking the City of Toronto's Procurement Policy and Purchasing By-law, the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, and the provisions of the RFP as the standard against which to audit the procurement.

Fairness Monitor Responsibilities for the RFP included the following:

1. Addressing any concerns relating to accountability/fairness (monitoring the level of openness, transparency and competitiveness of the procurement process);
2. Independent assurance of integrity of the procurement process with a signed attest statement for the nRFP;
3. Preparing a Final Attestation Report for the City that may be provided to Committee or Council as part of any required staff report to Committee or Council on a particular procurement;
4. Presenting report findings to General Government Committee or City Council members, if required;
5. Providing, if required, evidence and testify in relation to any legal claim that may arise from the

procurement process.

Fairness Monitor Deliverables for the RFP included the following:

1. Review of the nRFP – Fairness Monitor is to identify potential inconsistencies or lack of clarity in the nRFP and provide feedback to the City;
2. Assessing the procurement evaluation process, adequacy of the steps taken to mitigate risk (e.g. financial, credibility, liability), and the integrity of documentation as time permits;
3. Advice on critical procurement considerations regarding the call documents including:
 - 3.1. Identifying potential inconsistencies or lack of clarity in call document requirements, to meet business objectives, statutory regulations, policy directives, administrative requirements and best practices for procurement, as time permits;
 - 3.2. Review of evaluation guide prepared for this project for clarity and evaluation criteria considerations;
4. Activities addressed in the stated deliverables will include reviews of scoring and other related processes, how Supplier debriefing/complaint processes were undertaken, and ensuring that correct documentation is in place;
5. Ensuring that City Staff have provided evaluation team members with a briefing on best practices including:
 - 5.1. The principles and duties of fairness, care and proprietary information protection;
 - 5.2. Having a single-point-of-contact in place prior to and following evaluation;
 - 5.3. Avoidance and disclosure of conflict of interest, bias, and undue influence;
 - 5.4. Maintaining arms-length from political involvement/participation;
 - 5.5. Scoring procedures;
 - 5.6. The preparation, treatment and retention of evaluation documents;
6. Monitoring and immediate reporting to pre-identified senior management on any known or perceived conflicts of interest, occurrences of undue influence or other factors (among management/evaluation team members, as well as key stakeholder representatives), that may negatively impact the integrity of the evaluation/scoring of assessment process;
7. Reporting to PMMD Staff if it appears that the City is deviating from the documented nRFP processes;
8. Ensuring that the procurement management team, evaluation team members and other stakeholders understand ongoing confidentiality responsibilities post-Selection Committee recommendation;
9. Preparing a draft report and presenting to the General Government Committee and or City Council members of the Final Attestation Report; address comments/issues raised by Selection Committee prior to finalizing report; and,
10. Completion and distribution of the Final Attestation Report.

We have no objections to the recommendation made by the Corporate Real Estate Management Division identifying the highest scoring Supplier.

2. RFP Development and Issuance

We were retained during the RFP development phase and were given a short period to review and provide fairness comments on the RFP prior to its issuance. The RFP was issued on December 13, 2024 and the initial submission deadline was January 17, 2025. The revised submission deadline was January 31, 2025 at 12:00 Noon.

1. Open Period, Addenda, Questions and Answers

The RFP designated a single point of contact and explained the process for communication during the open period and evaluation process. We were given an opportunity to review all communications between Suppliers and the City prior to their posting. There are no unresolved matters of fairness to note in those communications.

The revised deadline for questions from Suppliers was 10 business days before closing – January 21, 2025, and we confirm that questions were not accepted after this date. All questions raised before the deadline were answered. Three addenda were issued before the revised deadline for issuance of addenda, five business days before closing, January 26, 2025.

We attended and monitored an optional pre-bid meeting for all Suppliers, which took place on January 7, 2025.

Based on the communications we reviewed, we have no fairness comments to note with regards to the open period exchanges that occurred.

2. Transparency of RFP Documents

The RFP stated all bid and performance requirements, submission requirements, evaluation criteria, stages of evaluation and the associated weightings of the criteria as required. The RFP further stated the evaluation methodology, bid evaluation scoring system scale and evaluation approach for all stages of the evaluation processes. Where there were, mandatory requirements, minimum scoring thresholds or pass/fail requirements, these were disclosed with a clear indication as to when and how such requirements would be applied, and the impact that failing to satisfy any of them would have on a bid's ability to move forward in the evaluation process.

3. RFP Time in Market

The RFP open period, after extensions requested by Suppliers and granted by the City, was 49 calendar days (seven weeks), sufficient time to permit qualified Suppliers to prepare compliant bids.

The use of an electronic tendering system for issuance and receipt of documents created efficiencies and maintained the security of documents during this part of the process.

4. Communication with the Fairness Monitor

Working with the Fairness Monitor, the Corporate Real Estate Management Division project team and PMMD representatives took great care to develop detailed evaluation criteria that objectively reflected the legitimate needs of the City, and to produce an RFP that was clear and precise RFP as well as susceptible to consistent application.

3. RFP Evaluation Process

1. Bid Receipt

The RFP specified two separate lots of material for the purpose of the procurement and of the evaluation, Lot 1 – Task Chairs and Lot 2 – Non Task Chairs. Suppliers were permitted the option of bidding on either of the two lots or both of them. Separate contracts would be awarded if different Suppliers emerged from the evaluation as the highest scoring Suppliers for each lot. Bids from the following five Suppliers were received through the City's SAP Ariba online submission system before the submission deadline.

- CTI Working Environments, Inc. – Lot 1 and Lot 2
- Ergocentric, Inc. – Lot 1
- Nightingale Corporation – Lot 1
- OWO Management, Inc. – Lot 1 and Lot 2
- POI Business Interiors, LP – Lot 1 and Lot 2

No late bids were received or accepted. Our fairness monitoring team monitored the entire evaluation process that followed the closing, and all results of each evaluation process stage as detailed below.

2. Stage 1 – Mandatory Submission Requirements

In accordance with this evaluation stage and its provisions, all five bids met the mandatory submission requirements and proceeded to the Stage 2A – Mandatory Technical Requirements. Stage 1 was evaluated by the PMMD team on a pass/fail basis. Our Fairness Monitor reviewed the summary evaluation results of this process and communications and had no fairness comments to note on the completion of all evaluation activities and findings of compliance. All bids passed this evaluation stage.

3. Stage 2A – Mandatory Technical Requirements

The City reviewed the bids to determine whether the minimum Mandatory Technical Requirements, as set out in the RFP, had been met. Stage 2A was evaluated by the PMMD team on a pass/fail basis. OWO Management, Inc. did not meet the Mandatory Technical Requirements and did not proceed to Stage 2B – Technical Proposal Rated Evaluation. All other proposals passed Stage 2A and proceeded to Stage 2B. We reviewed the summary evaluation results of this process and communications and had no fairness comments to note on the completion of all evaluation activities and findings of compliance. The remaining four bids passed this evaluation stage.

4. Stage 2B – Technical Proposal Rated Evaluation (100 points)

Stage 2B consisted of the technical proposal rated criteria evaluation as broken down into six subsections totaling 70 points. This stage was evaluated by a selection committee composed of staff of the City's Corporate Real Estate Management Division. The team members possessed the experience and qualifications to evaluate the submissions against the rated criteria – which were the only standard for the evaluation.

For each lot, proposals were awarded a score out 100 points. For Lot 1, the technical and price submissions were scored out of 70 and 30 points respectively. For Lot 2, the RFP placed more emphasis on the price, with a ratio of 60:40 between technical and price points. The RFP broke down the points by subsection and specified mandatory minimum scores for two subsections of the technical evaluation criteria as well as a minimum score for the technical evaluation criteria overall, as follows:

- i. Subsection 2 – Supplier Profile – both lots: 3 points
- ii. Subsection 3 – Experience and Qualifications of the Supplier – both lots: 18 points – minimum score: 11/18
- iii. Subsection 4 – Proposed Staff Team and Resources – both lots: 3 points
- iv. Subsection 5 – Proposed System/Solution – Lot 1: 23 points and Lot 2 – 13 points
- v. Subsection 6 – Work plan and Deliverables – both lots: 14 points – minimum score: 8/14
- vi. Sub-Section 7 – Governance and Reporting – both lots: 3 points
- vii. Sub-Section 8 – Operational Efficiencies/Effectiveness – both lots: 3 points
- viii. Sub-Section 9 – Environmental and Sustainability – both lots: 3 points
- ix. Technical Evaluation Criteria Overall – Lot 1: 49/70 and Lot 2: 42/60 (70% in each case)

All four remaining bids satisfied the minimum scoring thresholds of Stage 2B.

Stage 2C – Interviews

In accordance with the RFP, interviews were held with the four remaining Suppliers in the period March 31 – April 2, 2025. The purpose of the interviews was to allow Suppliers to address the major elements of their bids,

to obtain any required clarification, and to allow the City to ask questions of the key representatives of the Supplier's proposed team, so as to validate and make final adjustments to the evaluation scores. The Suppliers were not afforded an opportunity to modify their bids or otherwise introduce new information during the interview.

Bid Samples

In accordance with the RFP, the City requested samples of task chairs proposed by the four remaining Suppliers, all of whom had bid on Lot 1 – Task Chairs. The four bid samples were tested in the City's material testing facility for an ergonomics evaluation. Upon notification of deficiencies in its sample, CTI Working Environments, Inc. withdrew its proposal for Lot 1 – Task Chairs. Bid samples provided by Ergocentric, Inc., Nightingale Corporation, and POI Business Interiors, Inc. were ultimately determined to meet the mandatory requirements of the specifications set out in the RFP. At the end of Stage 2, the Suppliers advancing to Stage 3 – Pricing and Rankings, were as follows:

- Lot 1 – Task Chairs
 - Ergocentric, Inc.
 - Nightingale Corporation
 - POI Business Interiors, Inc.
- Lot 2 – Non Task Chairs
 - POI Business Interiors, Inc.
 - CTI Working Environments, Inc.

5. Stage 3 – Pricing and Rankings

Stage 3, performed by PMMD, consisted of scoring the submitted pricing of each remaining bid in accordance with the following price evaluation method on a lot by lot basis as follows:

$$\text{Lowest Grand Total Contract Value (Lot 1)} \div \text{Bidder's Grand Total Contract Value (Lot 1)} \times 30 \\ = \text{Bidder's Lot 1 Price points}$$

$$\text{Lowest Grand Total Contract Value (Lot 2)} \div \text{Bidder's Grand Total Contract Value (Lot 2)} \times 40 \\ = \text{Bidder's Lot 2 Price points}$$

Then, technical and price scores were summed for each remaining Supplier for each lot on which it had bid. Each remaining Supplier received a Stage 3 score out of a maximum 100 points for each lot on which it had bid. For each lot, bids were ranked based on their Stage 3 score. For Lot 1, POI Business Interiors, LP was ranked first. For Lot 2, CTI Working Environments, Inc. was ranked first.

6. Stage 4: Contract Negotiations

The Fairness Monitor has not been involved in Stage 4.

4. Evaluation Process Approach and Methodology

1. Evaluator Training Session

Prior to the evaluation of bids, the Selection Committee received a mandatory detailed evaluation training session by PMMD and the Fairness Monitor. The training covered all aspects of the evaluation, including how to execute evaluators' roles and responsibilities effectively and fairly. The Selection Committee was briefed on best practice

with respect to confidentiality of bids; conflict of interest; undue influence; scoring and comment procedures; and, the retention of documents, among other topics.

2. *Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality Management*

We are not aware of the existence of any conflict of interest or a breach of confidentiality occurring at any point during the evaluation. Each evaluation participant (evaluator or otherwise) was required to sign a declaration confirming their understanding of these requirements for disclosure, as it relates to conflicts of interests, and management of evaluation process information, as it relates to confidentiality.

3. *Undue Influence Management*

No evaluator or other individual exerted undue influence over the process. Each evaluation stage was completed in a sequential order as indicated in the RFP documents, with the oversight of the City's Selection Committee, PMMD and the Fairness Monitor. As stated above, the ergonomic evaluation of sample task chairs was performed by others. All key evaluation process decisions were made by more than one person and verified by at least one other.

4. *Scoring Methodology*

The Selection Committee completed the Stage 2 - Technical Proposal Rated Evaluation using the best practice two - step method: firstly, each evaluator, working alone, reviewed and scored, with supporting comments, each bid in its entirety; secondly, the Selection Committee met as a group to discuss their findings and, with reference to their initial comments, arrived at a consensus score for each criterion together. The Selection Committee also recorded notes justifying each consensus score. The Selection Committee ensured that the evaluation adhered to the disclosed RFP criteria and scoring criteria scale as well as the point weightings for each criterion. Each score and associated comment were discussed thoroughly and agreed to. Applying their knowledge and experience, the Selection Committee relied only on the submissions for information, comparing the content against the criteria in the RFP, and used the RFP scoring scale to allocate a score.

At the completion of the evaluation process, all calculations were verified by RGM as Fairness Monitor.

5. Debriefing

In accordance with Section 2.6 of Part 1 of the RFP, unsuccessful Suppliers will be offered a debriefing to aid the Supplier in presenting a better bid in subsequent procurement opportunities. These debriefings have not yet taken place.

6. Fairness Monitor Attestation

In conclusion, we confirm that the first-ranked Supplier for Lot 1 – Task Chairs is POI Business Interiors and for Lot 2 – Non Task Chairs, CTI Working Environments, Inc.

We attest that the RFP process was conducted in a procedurally fair, open and transparent manner and in alignment with the requirements of applicable directives, policies, trade agreements and the RFP.

We certify that the first-ranked Supplier was identified through a rigorous and well-documented evaluation process that we oversaw from beginning to end. With respect to fairness considerations, we approve the outcome of the process.

Please let me know if you need more information.

Sincerely,

Don Solomon, B.A., Cert. Arch. Tech.

Senior Fairness Monitor, Robinson Global Management Inc.

cc: Andrea Robinson, B.A., LL.M., Q.Arb., PMP.
Senior Fairness Monitor, Robinson Global Management Inc.