

JULY 2024

Frequently Asked Questions

Extension of the School Lunch Program

The Department *for* Education, Children and Young People is committed to enabling bright lives and positive futures.

The School Lunch Pilot, led by School Food Matters (SFM), provided nutritious cooked lunches to 15 schools in 2022. This increased to 30 schools in 2023.

School Food Matters has received funding from the Tasmanian Government to expand the School Lunch Pilot into a Program (the SLP). This commitment will be for 2 years in 2025 and 2026.

Expressions of Interest (EOI) are now open to Tasmanian Government primary schools (including primary years in District Schools) to select a further 15 schools to join the Program in 2025.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When does the EOI process run?

Expressions of Interest to participate in the Program in 2025 open on 25 July 2024. If your school is interested in participating in the Program, please submit the EOI application by Friday 23rd August 2024.

2. Are there any mandatory requirements for involvement in the program?

Yes.

Schools will need to:

- Be a Tasmanian Government primary school (or years K – 6 or within a District High School).
- Have a current School Food Matters Membership.
- Be accredited under the School Food Matters SmartFood Program or working towards it.
- Ensure that kitchen staff complete mandatory training, including Food Safety Supervisor training, and All About Allergens for Schools.
- Be willing to release relevant staff for professional development and workshop (no more than twice a year).
- Be willing to participate in evaluation activities.
- Have endorsement of the school Principal to participate.
- It is recommended that if successful, as part of a staff meeting, SFM brief staff on the program prior to commencement.

3. Are schools that were unsuccessful in the EOI process in previous years able to reapply?

Yes.

Primary schools that were unsuccessful in previous rounds of the EOI process are encouraged to review the feedback provided and resubmit an EOI.

4. How will meals be provided?

Schools will either be provided with ingredients to cook meals, or a pre-made main meal will be delivered through our partnership with Loaves and Fishes Tasmania.

5. How many days a week will lunch be provided?

This will depend on the school and its circumstances. For example, a school may take a staged approach, starting with one day per week in Term 1, and then expanding to two days over the course of 2025.

SFM has capacity to provide lunches in new participating schools up to two days per week. If your EOI is successful, the final days and number of lunches the program can provide will be negotiated with SFM prior to commencement.

6. Will staffing support be provided?

School staffing is included as part of the Tasmanian Government election commitment funding of this Program. This is a new component and is currently being negotiated for all schools that will be involved in the program from 2025. The number of staff hours required to support the program depends on the number of days the school is providing lunch and the number of students receiving lunch and whether the meal is from the central kitchen or cooked from scratch at the school.

Relevant staff will be supported by their SFM School Lunch Program Coordinator including school visits, support with delivery issues, professional development and provision of key information about the program. Additional internal school staffing resources may still be needed to ensure the smooth running of the Program, as part of the school's own resourcing.

7. What resources will my school be required to provide?

SFM will work with successful schools to undertake an equipment audit and determine any additional requirements. SFM have received funding under the Election Commitment to procure and provide for the purchase and installation of essential equipment. This equipment will then be an asset of the school and maintenance will be through school administration. Schools will need to locate an eating area for students, for example a lunchroom, hall, or in the classroom and dedicate 20 minutes to eat together (a crucial part of the lunch program).

If your school is selected, SFM recommends developing a leadership group to drive the Program in your school. This may include your identified staff – e.g. school Canteen Manager, Teachers Assistant/s, senior staff, classroom teacher/s and staff member/s that have a food background.

8. How does our school become a SFM member and/or accredited under the SmartFood Program?

For more information, refer to the SFM website under the 'School Food Service' tab www.schoolfoodmatters.org.au. If your school does not have a canteen, please contact SFM to discuss support for membership options info@schoolfoodmatters.org.au or 6223 8023.

9. Are students with food allergies and intolerances able to participate in the program?

SFM is currently trialling the provision of modified meals for students with food allergies and intolerances in a select number of schools. While this is in trial, new schools successful under the current EOI will unfortunately not be able to provide modified meals to these students. Vegetarian meals are currently available to all students. This is a developing space and SFM will keep schools updated.

10. Part of the previous pilot required students to be seated for lunch. Will this remain a requirement for phase two of the program?

Seated lunches are required. The Program is for all students to enjoy lunch together. However, the format of the Lunch Program will be determined with the school based on its context.

11. Is there a cost to parents for their child to participate in the Program?

In 2025 it will be optional for schools to ask parents for a voluntary donation towards the cost of the program if they wish. More details on this will be available in the online session.

12. Who do I contact for further information?

An online information session will be held in Week 3 Term 3, 2024. To sign up for this session click [here](#).

If you have further questions about the EOI process, please contact school.lunch.program@decyp.tas.gov.au.

For information on how the program may work in your school's specific context, please contact Julie Dunbabin info@schoolfoodmatters.org.au or 6223 8023.

Key Dates

ACTIVITY	DATE
Expression of Interest opens to schools.	25 July 2024
Online EOI information sessions for schools.	Week 3, Term 3 2024
Applications close.	23 August 2024
Assessment of applications.	Early September 2024
Schools notified of EOI outcome.	Mid to late October 2024
Feedback provided to unsuccessful schools.	1 November 2024
Information sessions for successful schools.	30 October or 6 November 2024