

# 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.

School Food Matters received funding from the Tasmanian Government in 2024 to expand the Healthy School Lunch Program to 60 Tasmanian government schools by 2026.

Expressions of Interest (EOI) open on 21 May 2025 for Tasmanian Government primary schools (including primary years in District Schools) to select a further 15 schools to start the Program in 2026.

**Applications must be completed using the [Online EOI Application Form](#), which will be open from 21 May to 13 June 2025.**

Two online information sessions for interested schools will be held during week 6, Term 2. Register for one of them in the link below:

[-Wednesday 4 June 3-3:30pm](#)

[-Thursday 5 June 11-11:30 am](#)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. When does the EOI process run?

Expressions of Interest to participate in the Program in 2026 open on 21 May 2025 and closes 13 June 2025.

### 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 (Kitchen Supervisor) for professional development and workshop once a term.

- Be willing to participate in evaluation activities.
- Have endorsement of the school Principal to participate.
- It is recommended that if successful, all staff be briefed on the program as part of a staff meeting prior to commencement. An information video will be provided by SFM to allow for this.

### **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 (cook from scratch), or a pre-made main meal (centrally provided) 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 2026.

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. 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. Successful schools may advertise and employ the Kitchen Supervisor or SFM can provide a Kitchen Supervisor.

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](http://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](mailto:info@schoolfoodmatters.org.au) or 6223 8023.

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

SFM is actively investigating how to better accommodate students with food allergies and intolerances. Through the new Allergy Consent Form, SFM have gathered more comprehensive information from parents, revealing that many students previously unable to participate in the program can now enjoy some or all SLP meals at their schools. As the program continues to expand, SFM is evaluating the most effective ways to serve this group of children.

## **10. Seating for lunches**

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 2026, 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?**

Two online information sessions for interested schools will be held during week 6, Term 2. Register for one of them in the link below:

- [Wednesday 4 June 3-3:30pm](#)
- [Thursday 5 June 11-11:30 am](#)

If you have further questions about the EOI process, please contact [school.lunch.program@decyp.tas.gov.au](mailto:school.lunch.program@decyp.tas.gov.au).

For information on how the program may work in your school's specific context, please contact Kate Carlin [info@schoolfoodmatters.org.au](mailto:info@schoolfoodmatters.org.au) or 6223 8023.

## **Key Dates**

ACTIVITY	DATE
Expression of Interest opens to schools.	21 May 2025
Online EOI information sessions for schools.	Week 6, Term 2 2025
Applications close.	13 June 2025 (COB)
Assessment of applications.	Mid July 2025
Schools notified of EOI outcome.	Mid to late August
Feedback provided to unsuccessful schools.	Week 6 Term 3 2025
Information sessions for successful schools.	3 September or 5 September