



Completing Tender Documents

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Pre-Qualification Questionnaire

- Process used to manage the number of suppliers to be invited to tender where there are potentially numerous suppliers in the market.
- The PQQ process is only used to “select” the suppliers to be invited to tender. Different criteria are used to evaluate the actual tenders and to “award” the contract to the successful supplier.
- If you are successful at the PQQ stage, you will then be invited to tender.
- NB, PQQ’s may also be used for under EU threshold contracts, but are not subject to the same restrictions.
- A PQQ can’t win you the contract, but it may lose you it!

Completion of a PQQ

- Public Contract Regulations 2006 only permit that contracting authorities can “select” suppliers using certain broad criteria:
 - **1) Economic and Financial Standing**
 - **2) Technical/Professional Ability and capacity**
 - **3) Legal status**
- By considering responses from suppliers in regard to the above, the Authority will be able to select eligible and capable suppliers to tender for the contract.



PQQ Evaluation

- What are the actual areas that we'll be looking for to select suppliers to tender? We're looking at PQQ responses for evidence of:-
 - Financial Health
 - Relevant business activities
 - Technical skills, ability, relevant experience
 - Health & Safety, Environmental & Equal Opportunities policies (where relevant & proportionate to the nature of the contract)
 - Adequate insurance provision
 - Quality controls in place
 - References



Tips for completing PQQ's

- Allow yourself enough time to complete the PQQ; late submissions will not be accepted!
- Remember this is a selection process, so ensure you thoroughly review the PQQ requirements and carefully consider your response. You will be competing with other suppliers to be selected for tendering.
- The PQQ process doesn't allow for any prior knowledge of your organisation by the contracting authority (even if you are the existing supplier).
- Ensure that you provide details on experience and references which are appropriate for the value and nature of the contract opportunity.
- If in doubt, ask! Make use of the nominated contact.



Invitation to Tender (ITT)

- Issued to suppliers who are successful at the PQQ stage only.
- Tenders may be required to be submitted in paper format, but more commonly electronic tendering is now used (at no cost to the supplier).
- Information that you submit in a tender is commercially confidential and won't be discussed with other suppliers.
- Your tender submission will need to be valid for the period stated in the document, so take this in to account when pricing.
- The deadline for receipt of tenders is non-negotiable!

MEAT

- MEAT = most economically advantageous tender.
- Very few public sector contracts are let on price alone. Although price is always an important factor.
- Cost/quality mix: contracting authorities are seeking a balance between affordability (the need to meet budget constraints) and achieving quality of a high standard.
- Publication of award criteria. Weightings and sub-weightings will be published which will enable suppliers to focus on what is really important for the contracting authority in the tender.



Pointers for responding to an ITT

- Remember this is a competitive process and between 5-10 other companies may still be bidding at this point.
- Attempt to differentiate yourself from the competition.
- Research the strategic aims of the contracting authority (use their website and tender document) and reflect this in your tender submission. Eg investigate the Sustainability agenda etc.
- Be guided by the tender award criteria. Focus your efforts on the most important areas.



BAFO/The Commercials

- BAFO = best and final offer.
- Public sector tendering is unlike the private sector and in almost all cases we will not enter in to negotiations with suppliers.
- Legal restrictions on public authorities make negotiation unlikely. Therefore, submit your BAFO at the time of the tender. Don't assume there will be an opportunity to reduce your prices.
- However, public sector contracts tend to last for 3-5 years in many cases, so please ensure your pricing model is sustainable.



The Evaluation Process

- Tender responses will be scored by a panel of evaluators in most cases. Scores will be moderated to avoid any potential bias.
- Try to identify who will be scoring the tender (will it be a functional expert?) and pitch your tender in a language attuned to the likely audience.
- You are likely to be invited to a presentation to discuss your tender submission and proposals for delivering the contract.
- If so, ensure you find out what you are expected to do (eg Who from your organisation should attend? Are the questions available in advance? What is the presentation question etc?).



Contract Award

- Hopefully, you will be successful with your contract opportunity. However, for each invitation to tender, 80-90% of participating suppliers are inevitably going to be disappointed.
- Unsuccessful suppliers have a legal right to a debrief.
- To maximise your chances of winning a public sector contract, use the opportunity for feedback/debrief to inform you on the strengths and weaknesses in your bid.
- Tendering is a learning process and it may take you a few attempts initially to be successful.



Key Points

- Don't be afraid to ask questions throughout the tendering process. If you are better informed, you stand a better chance of being successful.
- Do be committed if going after public sector contracts as it does require a reasonable level of effort to be successful at both PQQ and ITT stages.
- Do use the debriefs if you are unsuccessful. There is no such thing as failure, just the opportunity for feedback!
- Do attend our more detailed training sessions which will give you an in-depth walk through of typical public sector PQQ's and ITT's and will help you identify some common pitfalls.