



## **I am interested in a tender – what do I do next?**

Every tender is different and will require a different approach. Read through the tender carefully and ensure that your company can match the requirements of the tender to provide the goods or services. Pay special attention to deadlines, these are fixed and responses arriving after these times will not be considered.

The process of tendering can take many months from initial publication of the tender to the awarding of the contract so you will need to be patient. There are several stages you will have to go through and although the procedure is slightly different for lower-value contracts, the stages are as follows:

### **Follow the instructions**

Follow the instructions detailed in the tender about what to do next. Some tenders ask you to register your interest, (some online, some in writing). Some will ask for a Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) to be completed. At this stage you will be asked for information such as details of your finances and experience as well as requesting references from similar work that you have carried out. Pay special attention to deadline dates as these are fixed and any late applications will not be considered. You can download [A guide to completing pre-qualification questionnaires](#) (opens a new window).

### **Inviting Tenders**

If you qualify at the first stage the buyer may invite you to tender. They will send you further instructions including information about deadlines, a letter asking if you want to bid for the tender or not, details of the goods or services the organisation wants to buy, draft terms and conditions and details of how the bids will be assessed. You must confirm at this stage that you intend to make a bid for the work.

### **Invitation to Tender ITT**

If you receive and ITT you are being asked to make an offer that the buyer may then accept. You must answer all the requirements that are set out in the published tender. If you require help with this part of the process there are plenty of companies to be found on the web. Typing in “Writing Tenders” on Google gives quite a few. Another very good source of information is Business Link (<http://online.businesslink.gov.uk>). They can be an excellent source of free information and we have many customers who have found them very useful. It is always advantageous to find a company who will work with you, rather than writing the bid for you. You have far more knowledge and expertise about your business and how it works, than an external company and will be able to communicate this in your bidding document.

## **Evaluating the Bids**

The next stage is where the buyer evaluates all the responses to tender that they have received. They need to ensure that the bid you have made represents value for money and may be that they require further information from you in order that they can make a decision.

## **Awarding the contract**

For public sector tenders, an announcement will be made as to who has won the contract. A period of 10 days after this date is then allowed, for suppliers to ask for feedback on why the decision was made. It is useful to ask for feedback during this standstill period as it can provide valuable insight into preparing future bids.

## **For further help**

There is a programme called [Winning the Contract - learndirect](#) (opens a new window), – An online course which is part of a government initiative to help small and medium-sized business who are looking to supply goods and services to the public sector.

**Good luck with your bid and don't forget to sign up to receive your tenders directly by email. This will give you the time to focus on the bid. <http://www.tender-service.co.uk/>**