



RISE

Retrofit information,
support & expertise

Procuring for retrofit: Framework access

Supply Chain Advice Pack

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www.riseretrofit.org.uk



Overview

The aim of the advice pack is to provide the supply chain with details of where to look for opportunities to get involved in delivering retrofit projects, as well as sharing feedback on creating a compelling and competitive bid.

Where will framework opportunities be advertised?

In the UK, retrofit tender opportunities for contractors are published on several platforms. You can register on these platforms and monitor opportunities when they are issued. The platforms include:

- **Bidstats:** This platform provides access to UK government contracts, including those related to retrofit projects. You can find procurement notices and live tenders.
- **Find a Tender Service (FTS):** This is an official UK government service where public sector procurement notices, including those for retrofit works are published.
- **Local Authority Websites:** Many local councils publish their own tender opportunities, including those for retrofit projects.
- Some procurement groups have launched a Retrofit and Decarbonisation (N9) framework.

Assessing whether the opportunity is right for you

Once an opportunity is publicised, several actions can be progressed to fine tune whether you will submit a response and whether the opportunity is worth spending resources pursuing. The process typically involved the following stages and considerations:

1. **Understand the requirements:** carefully read the tender documents to understand the requirements, any qualifications required, evaluation criteria, and submission deadlines. Make sure your organisation can meet these requirements.
2. **Express Interest:** Register your interest in the tender by following the instructions in the contract notice. This may involve completing a Selection Questionnaire. At this stage, the buyer may send out a Selection Questionnaire (SQ)/Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) to obtain further information which can aid the bid and selection process. To streamline the process, the Government has released a Standardised Selection Questionnaire (SQ) document.
3. **Prepare your bid:** develop a comprehensive bid that addresses all the requirements. Include relevant evidence such as statistics, testimonials, case studies, and lists of prior similar contracts.

4. **Submit your bid:** Submit your bid by the specified deadline. Ensure all required documents are included and formatted correctly.
5. **Evaluation and Award:** The contracting authority will evaluate all bids based on the criteria outlined in the tender documents. Successful bidders will be awarded the contract.

This specific process can vary slightly depending on the specific tender and contracting authority.

What is MEAT and MAT?

The Procurement Act (2023) has resulted in a shift from awarding contracts based on the "Most Economically Advantageous Tender" (MEAT) (Under the Public Contract Regulations 2015) to the "Most Advantageous Tender" (MAT). MAT reflects a broader focus on value for money, encompassing not just cost but also social, environmental, and economic factors.

This change allows contracting authorities to consider a wider range of factors beyond just price when evaluating tenders.

The shift to MAT encourages the consideration of social value benefits like local job creation, apprenticeships, and environmental impact, such as carbon reduction and energy efficiency. Social value includes supporting local priorities, addressing unemployment and skills shortages, and improving community wellbeing.

Social value can also incorporate contributions to economic growth. Proposals include stimulating the local economy using local suppliers, creating jobs, and attracting investment.

The recent procurement reforms place a greater emphasis on SME participation, encouraging authorities to break large contracts into smaller lots to enable greater competition and open opportunities for specialist suppliers.

What information is required for tenders?

Retrofit public sector tenders often require extensive documentation. Be prepared to provide:

- **Pre-Qualification Questionnaires (PQQs):** These assess your suitability for the contract.
- **Technical Specifications:** Detail the specific requirements you need to meet.
- **Method Statements:** Describe how you will deliver the contract and manage risks.
- **Risk Assessments:** Describe your approach to risk and risk assessments, and how you identify potential hazards and outline mitigation measures.
- **Insurance Certificates:** Prove you have appropriate insurance coverage.
- **Financial Information:** Details of recent accounts, to assess suitability for specific project values.

Top tips for bids

Here are some tips to help you create a successful bid:

- **Understand the requirements:** Thoroughly read the tender documents to ensure you understand all the requirements and criteria. Address each point clearly in your bid, with a heading highlighting the question asked and what your response is.
- **Tailor your bid:** Customise your bid to the specific tender. Generic responses do not score as well as tailored, specific responses. Highlight how your experience and capabilities align with the project's requirements and needs.
- **Provide evidence:** Include relevant evidence such as case studies, testimonials, and statistics that demonstrate your ability to deliver the project successfully. Where the question states a requirement to 'evidence' an answer, your response should be collated to provide testimony and proof.
- **Be clear and concise:** Write your bid in a clear and concise manner. Responses are generally limited to a specific word or character count. Avoid jargon and ensure your points are easy to understand, well laid out and legible.
- **Show Value for Money:** Demonstrate how your proposal offers value for money. This could be through cost-effective solutions, innovative approaches, or added benefits. If you have a perceived advantage over your competitors, maybe due to location because you are already working in the locality and have specific market knowledge and intelligence of the supply chain, then this should be stated. Build upon any unique selling points. Emphasise what sets your organization apart from competitors.
- **Follow the instructions:** Ensure you follow all submission instructions, including formatting, document requirements, and deadlines. There are regularly restrictions on file size for uploading submissions, font type and size to be used, restrictions regarding whether your own documents can be used, or if the templates provided form the basis of your submission.
- **Proofread:** Carefully proofread your bid to avoid any errors or omissions. A well-presented bid reflects professionalism and attention to detail.
- **Engage with the Client:** If possible, engage with the client before submitting your bid. This can help you understand their priorities and tailor your proposal accordingly, and this may be attending bidder meet the buyer open days, site visits or raising queries and observations during the tender period.
- **Seek feedback:** If your bid is unsuccessful, seek feedback to understand areas for improvement. This can help you refine your approach for future tenders.

These tips should help you create a compelling and competitive bid.