



Bidding Process

This guide is designed to help you compile your further competition documentation.

It is intended to be used in conjunction with the standard procedures and documentation you may already have in place in your own procurement function, by highlighting some of the key instructions to provide to bidders.

A clearly written tender document is important as it will mitigate the need for bidders' clarification questions, saving you time and resource.

Information to include within the invitation to tender

Submitting a tender

You should provide details of how suppliers are required to submit their bids. Some suggestions are:

- details of any e-tendering system to be used and relevant technical guidance
- what format responses are required to be submitted in, including maximum response lengths, use of attachments etc.
- the process for submitting questions and clarifications and how these will be responded to, including associated timescales

Evaluation criteria and scoring guidance

Evaluation criteria vary by framework, and you need to apply evaluation criteria and sub-criteria in line with those that apply to the relevant framework. You should also provide details of the respective weightings for price and non-price (quality) elements.

The evaluation criteria and associated questions should be linked directly to your specification to ensure the questions you ask, and the supplier's responses, are relevant to your requirement.

You should provide full evaluation guidance to bidders to ensure they understand what is required in order that they can respond to your requirements to the best of their abilities.

Scoring system: non-price elements

In addition to the evaluation criteria and questions, you should provide full details of how these will be weighted and scored. This should include the scoring mechanism to be used and on what basis different scores will be allocated. You may have standard formats for this within your procurement function. If you would like any further guidance please contact the relevant framework manager.

Scoring system: price elements

You should make it clear to the bidders exactly which prices or combination of prices, e.g. a basket of prices, will be evaluated. It must also be clear how the scoring will be applied to the bidders' prices.

As an example, the following formula may be applied to prices to compare each bidder's evaluated price against the lowest tendered price:

$$\text{Score} = \text{Weighting} \times \frac{\text{Lowest Tendered Price}}{\text{Tendered Price}}$$

Award decision

It should be made clear on what basis the award decision will be made and what will happen should that decision not be straightforward, e.g. should there be a situation where two or more bidders achieve the highest total score.

Evaluation

The evaluation of bids should be carried out in line with both your own internal procedures and the published evaluation criteria and guidance.

Evaluators must only evaluate on the basis of the evidence provided in relation to each question, and not on the basis of any past experience or other knowledge of the bidder.

Each bid should be evaluated on its own merit and not by comparison with other bids.

If you would like any further guidance on this please contact the relevant framework manager.

Further competition timetable

For further competitions under a framework, there is no specified minimum period you need to allow for bidders to respond. You should, however, ensure that the time allowed is reasonable with regard to the amount of work involved in providing a good response.

Within the invitation to tender you should provide an outline of the timescales relating to the different stages involved in the further competition. An example of a timeline is included below, these times are considered best practice, but do not include any internal organisational processes you may also need to consider:

Date	Time	Activity
01.07.17		Publication of the Further Competition Invitation
02.07.17		Clarification period starts
12.07.17		Clarification period closes (" Tender Clarifications Deadline ")
28.07.17		Deadline for submission of a Tender to the Authority Contract (" Tender Submission Deadline ")

21.08.17		Decision Finalised
26.08.17		Standstill Letters Issued
05.09.17		Standstill Closes
06.09.17		Contract Award

Terms of the further competition

You should clearly set out the conduct expected of each of the parties involved in the further competition. Below are some areas you may wish to consider:

- Contact during the further competition exercise and canvassing
- Collusive behaviour
- Compliance
- Right to cancel or vary the further competition

Evaluator guidance

In order to evaluate a further competition in an open, transparent and fair way, evaluators need to understand the evaluation process and what is expected of them. The points below will help evaluators comply with procurement regulations and complete their evaluation in a way which means you will obtain the correct result in a compliant manner. It is best practice for evaluators to make notes on how and why they came to each score. These notes can be used during your consensus meeting as an aid to why each score was allocated.

1. Evaluators should take time ahead of commencing any work to read and fully understand the evaluation process.
2. Scores and comments given must be entirely consistent with the published evaluation guidance and marking scheme.
3. Evaluators should familiarise themselves with any clarification questions raised by potential suppliers during the bidding process, and the lines of response provided.
4. You should clearly document why you have awarded each and every mark, stating your rationale for each comment.
5. Each bidder's submission must only be evaluated on the evidence provided and not on past performance or market track record.
6. Submissions must only be evaluated on the merit of the answers they have provided and not in comparison with other bidders tenders.
7. Evaluations should be entirely independent with no conferring between evaluators, whilst evaluating and ahead of the consensus meeting taking place.
8. It is best practice to evaluate by supplier against a specific lot (if applicable) or question rather than evaluating the entire response from a supplier. This approach offers balance and a more consistent output.

If you require any further assistance, our framework management team are happy to help. Please email healthdo@crowcommercial.gov.uk or call 0345 410 2222.