

How to Submit a Tender

Contents

Registration	1
Submitting your Tender documents	2
Other Tips:.....	2
DO's and DON'TS	4
Some Common Mistakes.....	4
Frequent Questions and Answers	6
Summary.....	9

If you are interested in supplying to a local authority or organisation in North Wales, look on their website for key words such as “Procurement”, “Tender Opportunities”, “Supplying to the council”, “preferred suppliers” – most will have details on their website of any opportunities and how you can find out more about them. You may be sign posted to a procurement portal. Most Local Authorities and organisations in North Wales use Sell2Wales.

Registration

If you've never applied through Sell2Wales before, please register now – It's easy and free of charge and they can offer you support if you need additional information or help through the process.

It's also a good idea to register against the commodity codes on Sell2Wales and that you think may suit your business capabilities and experience as this allows for automatic notifications of when tenders and other associated information is posted on Sell2Wales.

<https://www.sell2wales.gov.wales/helpandresources/suppliers>.

When you receive notification of a tender which is of interest:

- Download all documentation and store it in a separate folder on your computer system. If only a hard copy of the tender document is available, make copies and keep the original safe. Do not mark the original in any way as it will be needed for final submission.
- Read the documents thoroughly. Assessing whether a tender is right for your business is not always possible from the short tender notification description or summary, so you may require a detailed look at the tender documents and specifications. In particular read the contract –sometimes there are terms within the contract which companies are not prepared, or unable, to fulfil, for example, areas around intellectual property.

Submitting your Tender documents

How to submit a good application with a higher chance of being awarded the contract.

You win by demonstrating that you can provide a high consistent standard of service delivery and that you are the least risk, that your tender is the least risk to the tendering organization / Buyer. You demonstrate:

- A sound methodology. Throughout your entire tender response, you need to prove that you understand how you'll go about delivering the service / Contract.
 - Demonstrate best practice
 - Demonstrate a high standard - Don't simply provide a list of features, take your responses one step further and state the benefits.
 - Demonstrate how you'll provide the contract and how you'll keep it on track.
 - Demonstrate understanding of the risks. List out the risks. This shows you've planned for those risks, it all shows that you understand the scope, you understand the approach. You're providing the least risk approach to the market or to the tenderer.
 - Demonstrate that you can deliver. You do that by demonstrating that you know through your sound approach and methodology, through your understanding of the risks, through your understanding of scope, and your key personnel. All of these ties together into demonstrating that you can deliver.

Other Tips

Make it easy for the reader

Remember that a number of people will be evaluating your tender or PQQ response so make it easy for them to read and understand.

Make it easy to navigate

- Index page at the beginning
- Use page numbers
- Show company name & contact details towards the front
- If possible, use the *headers & footers* to contain useful information e.g. section name, content, company name etc.
- Cross-reference where appropriate and explain so items can be found easily through the cross-referencing
- Take care with the layout, style and copy
- Bullets help emphasise points and make them easy to absorb
- Use images - a picture paints a thousand words
- Charts are often a better way of showing information when compared to long tracts of words e.g. flow charts showing a process

Clear pricing

Complete any pricing schedule, clarify any confusing issues and explain assumptions. **Be professional**

Your tender response is your shop window so make it look smart, be clear, concise and better than the competition.

But don't be too modest

Do let them know how good you are - So use evidence:

- Examples
- Case studies
- Testimonials

Innovation

Very few organisations want to stand still, they want to do better; this is why showing how you can bring new ideas to a contract is important. In this fast-moving world, things are always changing so innovation also demonstrates that you are flexible and capable of providing more than a 'me too' solution.

Added value

Customers are always looking to get a better deal so adding value is always going to be an important part of your bid. This means offering more 'value for money' NOT being cheaper e.g. you may be able to add a service to your bid that costs you little or nothing but offers your customer and commissioner an enhanced service at a cost which is sustainable and appropriate (and it is line with other competitors)

- Include any aspects of your answer which will bring something to the buyer which is beyond their existing capability - e.g. Can you bring additional business benefit to the Buyer's business?
- Can you bring new skills or methods in the delivering of the overall solution?
- Can you add anything extra to your solution at no extra cost?
- Can you make the overall process more efficient and provide an enhanced personalised service?

Differentiation

Innovation and added value also help you stand out from the crowd. If five bids are received that are all very similar but you have shown new ideas, improvements and added value then you are increasing your chances of success.

Social Value

For public sector tenders, you now often need to demonstrate [social value](#) too. This concerns economic, social and environmental well-being of the "relevant area".

For each commissioning and procurement exercise Ambition North Wales (ANW) will consider how the Social Value they aim to generate will in particular benefit each project / tender.

Appropriate Social Value will be identified from ANW Social Value Outcomes Framework which has been tailored from the National TOMs Wales on the basis of what is relevant and proportionate for each situation.

This means that our approach to Social Value is a bespoke approach, tailored each and every time.

DO's and DON'TS

DO's	DON'TS
Do you research – make sure you understand what Social Values are to be achieved by a particular tendering	Don't confuse social value, with value for money.
Do make sure your Social Value information relates to the tender you are applying for.	Don't confuse Social Value with Community Benefits
Do provide evidence (with examples if asked) of how you will deliver your Social Values for the entire length of the	Don't confuse Social Value with Social Impacts and Outcomes.
Do be specific – being vague could demonstrate you don't fully understand or want to commit to what is being asked.	Don't offer anything as Social Value if it's included in the core contract

Some Common Mistakes

Noncompliance

Basically, if the buyer / commissioner wants you to submit two hard copies, one electronic, one in color and one black and white – this is the requirement and this is what you must submit. The evaluation process may dismiss your application at initial stages purely on the fact that your submission is noncompliant with submission criteria.

- Submit it by the deadline date, in the format and with information requested,

Failing to demonstrate capability

This is where an applicant responds to the tender questions and they'll tell the tendering organization they can do it but they won't prove that they can do it. Every time you say that you can do something you need to demonstrate it and you do that by showing relevant examples of how you did in the past, how you would do it for this particular tender, what's different about the other services or what's different about this service and how you will change your process to suit this one.

Failing to understand the scope of the work of the project

This is a little bit different than capability. In capability, you're trying to demonstrate that you have the skills and experience to deliver the project. When you're trying to demonstrate your understanding of the scope, you need to prove to the evaluation panel that you know so much about this type of project that you factored everything in, you understand the project so well.

Frequent Questions and Answers

Question	Answer
Is a consortium bid allowed from more than one supplier working together	Yes – Ambition North Wales are happy to receive submissions from consortium applicants. The ITT documents will usually stipulate if consortium bids are not allowed. You must be sure that there is a difference between a consortium and collusion as you will be required to submit an anti-collusion document. Unless the consortium is registered as a separate entity one supplier will need to commit to being the contracted lead supplier is successful in award.
Do I need to submit a response for the core and the optional element	No – You may choose to submit only to the core element requirements. Or you may choose to submit against both the Core and optional element. It should be noted that only the core element will be scored. No submission will be treated less favorably or disregarded if the optional element is not completed / submitted.
Do I have to submit to every social value Measure	No – your submissions can include as many or as few measures as you'd like. However as per ITT your submission will not be progressed past the hard gate stage if no measure is submitted. You do need to make sure that your social value offering is relevant to North Wales and the Growth deal objectives.

Can Timescales be extended	It is not normal practice that an advert / deadline can be changed – however in extenuating circumstances consideration may be given (with very good reason and evidence), It's always worth asking through the question and answer function as advertised. If it's after this date you will need to contact the details listed on the advert – BE AWARE in most cases requested to extend deadlines are declined.
Do I need the specialist knowledge as described in the specification?	No – but it would be expected that you buy in any services at your own expense in order to be able to satisfy the requirements of the specification or consider a consortium approach.
Is this opportunity suitable for any size supplier?	Yes – providing that all requirements specified in the documentation can be demonstrated and met. The advert and specification will usually state if the opportunity isn't suitable for a particular sized supplier.
I've supplied previously to the organisation who has advertised the invitation to tender, Shall I use previous experience of supplying to them as an example.	If it's relevant to the service you are submitting a bid for then yes, however answer every question in the bid document – missing out a couple of vital questions can lose you the entire bid. A good rule of thumb is to complete the application answering each question as if you've never supplied to the organization previously. Sell yourself and never assume the evaluation process knows anything about you, your organization or what you supply / provide. Remember also, if you are using previous experience with an organization to anonymize everything in order to ensure you do not breach data protection guidelines and remain professional Top Tip: BE THOROUGH

There are questions and process that I don't understand in the Invitation to tender, should I just answer them to the best of my ability.

No – There is a period of time when any potential applicant can submit clarification questions on the process and information required through the advertised method. Use this wisely and ask as many clarification questions as you need. It is advisable not to submit any bid until this period closes as other applicants may ask different questions and ALL questions and Answers are shared with any interested applicant. You need to be aware that it's only through the advertised method than you can ask questions though – individual officers / services are not allowed to offer any clarity under the procurement process legislation

Ask as many questions as you want within the time period allowed. This is your only chance to seek

I have completed a response but it exceeds the word limit - Am I ok to submit it anyway	You can submit it; however, the evaluation process will not take anything over and above the advertised word limit into account and it will be disregarded. If you feel this last bit of information is what really sells your organization, consider putting it at the start of the word limit and editing out something not as important. You must remember to stick to the specified font type and size too. You don't need to repeat the question at the beginning of your word limit - as long as it's clearly marked as to what question it relates to this will be fine for evaluation purposes.
I have already provided information in one section and now it's asking for the same information in a different section, shall I just signpost them in the direction of the original information.	It is recommended that this is clarified during the window of opportunity for asking questions. Different organizations will score differently and may split the application into different sections for scoring by different individuals and as such no cross refereeing will be allowed. If you do sign post make sure it's clear and that it answers all elements of the question asked. Best practice would suggest that if you are submit information on a different question (even if it's been asked before) re submit it again in full.
I've tried to submit my application electronically and the system keeps crashing / slow loading / won't let me submit - I'm worried I'm going to miss the deadline. What can I do?	Firstly, please check that you have uploaded (if able) the mandatory / Hard gate documents. In some instances, you won't be able to submit the next part without this being completed. If you are satisfied that you have completed the mandatory / hard gate documents, immediately contact the provider where Invitation is listed and the portal that you are trying to upload to - In most cases it will either be Etenderwales. Carrying out the following action: • Take a screen shot of the error message - if possible ensure that time of screen shot is captured (this will help determine if it's before the deadline) • Note the date, time and name of call handler • Explain problem clearly and listen to any advice / action given • Contact name listed on tender invitation to make them aware and advise what action you have taken. - The commissioner can speak directly to the hosting platform / portal and also request a log of your calls and issues. • If issue is resolved but deadline has passed you should still submit your application - a decision will then be made around whether evaluation of your submission will take place based on the facts from the event leading up to a late submission.

Summary

How to submit a good application with a higher chance of being awarded the contract.

You win by demonstrating that you are the least risk, that your tender is the least risk to the client. You demonstrate:

- A sound methodology. Throughout your entire tender response, you need to prove that you understand how you'll go about delivering the service / Contract.
 - Demonstrate best practice
 - Demonstrate a high standard - Don't simply provide a list of features, take your responses one step further and state the benefits.
 - Demonstrate how you'll provide the contract and how you'll keep it on track.
 - Demonstrate understanding of the risks. List out the risks. This shows you've planned for those risks, it all shows that you understand the scope, you understand the approach. You're providing the least risk approach to the market or to the tenderer.
 - Demonstrate that you can deliver. You do that by demonstrating that you know through your sound approach and methodology, through your understanding of the risks, through your understanding of scope, and your key personnel. All of this ties together into demonstrating that you can deliver.
 - Be aware of the social value and community benefits your organization can offer. Highlight these in your bids.

DON'T LEAVE COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING YOUR BID /

APPLICATION UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE

Further support and information can be found at:

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/growing-business/contracts-and-tenders-sell2-wales-selling-government/tender-contract>