Administration

Tender documentation should provide bidders with background information about the goods or services required, as well as setting out the detailed requirements.

Tender documentation will typically comprise instructions to bidders with the conditions to participate.

As with all aspects of the Procurement Journey, the activities at this stage must be carried out in a carefully managed manner that supports the Principles of Procurement.

It is your responsibility to ensure these requirements are met.

Guidance on conduct is therefore contained within the subsequent Issue Documents stations.

Electronic Tendering

Open or close

Electronic tendering enables you to manage the procurement process online. It:

- reduces the paperwork involved in tendering exercises
- provides an electronic audit trail
- allows you to provide a faster response to questions and points of clarification during the tender process.

It is best practice to use PCS-Tender, if the Buyer has access to it, as PCS-Tender manages the administrative aspects of the tendering process.

If PCS-Tender is being used, the relevant project code should be entered into the Contract Notice on Public Contracts Scotland (PCS). Alternatively, if the Buyer does not have access to PCS-Tender, then Public Contracts Scotland – Advertising should be used throughout the process.

Publication of Documents

Open or close

Invitation to Tender documents must be:

- offered on the internet
- unrestricted
- with full direct access
- non-discriminatory in manner
- free of charge.

These documents must be available from the date of publication of a Contract Notice , or the date on which the Invitation to Confirm Interest was sent.

Only those bidders who have passed the appropriate selection stage will be allowed to tender in a two-stage procedure.

For the following procedures:

- Restricted Procedure
- Competitive Dialogue Procedure
- Innovation Partnership
- Competitive Procedure with Negotiation

An invitation to submit a tender must be issued to selected bidders at the same time and in writing. However, the open procedure allows for ITTs to be issued on request at any point prior to the date set for submission of tenders.

Timescales

Open or close

Where ITT documents cannot be issued electronically for example, because the contract is of a nature which requires the use of specialised tools and/or files, other transmission means can be used. The tender time limit should be increased by five days except where permitted in a case of duly substantiated urgency.

Timescales for each procedure can be found in the relevant procurement route station.

Deadlines must be extended where:

- additional information requested by a bidder is not supplied at least six days before the deadline. This information must have been requested by the bidder in good time and is of significant importance.
- significant changes are made to the procurement documents. This will be reduced to four days when the accelerated procedure is used.

The length of extension must be proportionate to the complexity of the change and/or the additional information being provided.

To proceed with a tender extension the necessary approval must be obtained in accordance with your internal governance and legislation. If the date is amended, the new date should be notified to all tenderers. If any tenderer have already submitted a bid they should be given the opportunity of withdrawing their original bid. They can then submit a revised bid in line with the extended tender deadline.