



HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE IPCC

Information for Suppliers

Living and breathing diversity is a core value of the IPCC. This means that we will ensure equal opportunities for all suppliers with transparent and fair selection procedures based only on the supplier's ability to provide value for money. It also means that part of what we look for when defining value for money in providing goods and services for the IPCC is a reflection of that core value.

Introduction

Every year the IPCC invites suppliers to tender and to quote for a variety of goods and services, providing organisations of all sizes with commercial opportunities.

We recognise that some firms might not apply for our contracts because they have insufficient information about opportunities and not enough understanding of the IPCC's contracting processes. This guide aims to overcome these difficulties and explains how to apply for contracts that are advertised and what is expected of you when you win a contract and work for the IPCC.

Although this guide cannot assure you of success, it should provide enough information to give you the opportunity to be considered for IPCC work.

About the IPCC

The Independent Police Complaints Commission is an executive non-departmental public body that was established in April 2004 to raise standards, cut delays, increase public confidence and transform the way police forces handle complaints from the public.

The IPCC has teams of investigators headed by Regional Directors in each of its regions, to assist with supervision and management of some police investigations. They also carry out independent investigations into serious incidents or allegations of misconduct by persons serving with the police. The Commission is administered through a staff of approximately 360.

Living and breathing diversity is a core value of the IPCC. This means that the IPCC is fully committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all suppliers with transparent and fair selection procedures based on the supplier's ability to provide value for money. It also means that part of what we look for when defining value for money in providing services to or for the IPCC is a reflection of that core value.

Prospective suppliers are urged to read very carefully the full Standard Contract which is provided with every InvitationToTender or quotation request. If there is any part of the Contract which you are fundamentally opposed to, you should state this clearly in your tender submission.

The IPCC's Procurement Service

Our overall aim is to improve the IPCC's procurement function. We are part of the Commission's Corporate Services Directorate based at 90 High Holborn in London. We provide support to the organisation in tasks related to

buying supplies and services using a variety of contractual arrangements ranging from small simple orders through to large contracts.

We strongly believe that services should be delivered by the organisation, providing best value and we aim to build good working relationships with suppliers whatever their size, style or make-up, in order to achieve our goals.

All Suppliers Welcome to Bid

Ensuring equal opportunities for all suppliers is a core value for the IPCC and means that our selection procedures are transparent, fair and based only on the supplier's ability to provide us with value for money. So it does not matter to us if you are a large or a small company, a well known name or a relative newcomer, or if you are local to our office or based far away. What we want to know is whether and how well you can deliver the result we are seeking.

We also want to select suppliers that hold similar core values to our own. This is why, in our Invitations To Tender, we always ask to see suppliers' policies on equal opportunities, also known as diversity. What we want to know is that you, like ourselves, are committed to equal opportunities for all.

We are keen to work with small businesses that engage with the local community and this ethos applies to those working with our regional offices in Sale, Cardiff and Coalville as well as in London.

Best Value

Seeking value for money doesn't mean going for the cheapest, but a balance between cost, quality and performance. We have to take account of all aspects of cost, including running and disposal costs, as well as the initial purchase price. Our specifications therefore have to reflect the needs of our end-users as well as cost-effectiveness and affordability.

How to Find Out About Our Contracts

Suppliers, both locally based and national, are welcome to contact the Procurement Team in London to ask about forthcoming contracts. If there is nothing immediately suitable for your firm to apply for, you can leave your contact information with us and we will endeavour to get in touch with you when we are seeking Expressions of Interest in a contract relevant to your company.

If we need to publicise a forthcoming contract, you will be able to see the advertisement in OJEU or on the www.contraxweekly.co.uk web site.

Approved Suppliers

The IPCC has a list of approved suppliers. Approved suppliers are those that have been selected through a competitive process to do work for us. So if your company is successful in bidding for work through a tendering exercise,

you will become an Approved Supplier for that commodity for the duration of your contract.

How to Apply For Contracts

The advertisements placed by the IPCC will set out what is required from potential tenderers and invite companies to apply to be considered. Normally you will be asked to apply expressing an interest in the contract. This might be through an application form or by sending in the information we have requested

Sourcing and Tendering

For strategic goods and services the IPCC will seek competitive quotations or tenders. For contracts that may cost approaching or over £95,000 in value, the IPCC will follow the regulations set by the European Union.

European Procurement Regulations

The European Union requires the observation of certain thresholds whereby, if a public service organisation is going to spend more than a set value, they must offer suppliers in all countries of the Union an opportunity to bid. This is done through the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) where we place advertisements asking for Expressions of Interest EOI).

Although suppliers from the whole of the European Union are invited to express an interest in our contracts, we do ask for submissions to be sent to us in the English language.

The European Union sets the financial thresholds for public service contracts which have to follow the regulations. The thresholds apply to the full term of the contract and not just the annual cost and are updated in January every two years. Detailed information about the current thresholds can be found on the web site of the Office of Government Commerce at www.ogc.co.uk

Advertisements

Advertisements placed in the Official Journal of the European Union can be seen through a number of sources such as www.contraxweekly.co.uk. For further guidance on EU procurement you might find it helpful to look at the OGC's web site: www.ogc.gov.uk

Advertisements asking for Expressions of Interest will set out how suppliers should respond and the date and time by which the EOI is required. An indication of the evaluation criteria to be used will also be included and you should keep these in mind when you prepare your Expression of Interest.

Tendering

All procurement activity carried out by the IPCC will be transparent and fair to suppliers, at the same time as ensuring proper competition for contracts. We do not favour any particular suppliers in any way. We are keen to research markets and seek out innovation, particularly when improvements can be demonstrated in terms relating to best value or the environment.

Those suppliers who are invited to tender will be given full instructions about how to respond, together with a full schedule of events, including the date and time when submissions have to be received by the Commission.

The specification aims to convey the relevant information that is necessary for the supplier to understand the nature and extent of the IPCC's requirements, as well as the constraints attached to the delivery of the requirements and performance assessments. The specification normally forms part of the contract.

All suppliers invited to tender are given the opportunity to ask questions relating to the tender documents and a timetable is sent out showing deadline dates for both questions and answers. A full list of Q&As is sent to every supplier involved in the tender, although no information will be included that might reveal the identity of the supplier asking the question.

It is not usual for there to be any extension to the permitted time limit on tenders. Any submissions received after the deadline will not normally be considered.

Tender Evaluation

Your tender submission will be marked against the overall key objectives set out in the documents inviting you to tender. The papers will also tell you the standards (criteria) that will be used to judge and evaluate tender submissions.

The IPCC will usually have a panel of people to judge tender submissions, including representation from the procurement team as well as the client department and other interested parties.

Once a successful supplier has been selected and the contract agreed, the other suppliers and firms that sent in quotations or tenders will be debriefed and told the reasons why they were unsuccessful on this occasion. The debriefing will be designed to be positive and to help you improve on any submissions you may make in future whether to the IPCC or another public body.

Confidentiality

All information supplied in the course of a tender exercise will be used only for the purpose of evaluating suppliers' responses. Information contained within

a tender submission is considered to be confidential. However, under the Freedom of Information Act the IPCC may be obliged to disclose confidential information if legally required to do so. Therefore you must tell us if you believe any of the information you have provided to be commercially sensitive or a trade secret.

Suppliers may not pass to anyone else any information relating to an IPCC tender or contract or use the information themselves for any activity that is not directly connected with the tender or contract.

If you are invited to tender and then choose not to take part in the tendering exercise, please return all the documents to the IPCC.

Health and Safety

The IPCC has a duty to be compliant at all times with existing health and safety regulations in order to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its employees, contractors and the general public. The IPCC manages potential workplace hazards by assessing risks and establishing suitable risk control measures according to current regulatory requirements

Contract Monitoring

We would normally expect our contract with you to demonstrate value for money, continuous improvement and a productive relationship. We will agree with you a Service Level Agreement aimed at contributing to the provision of a good service. Your company's performance will be reviewed through regular meetings with your company's representative.

Security for Contractors' Personnel

If you win an IPCC contract, your representative at the IPCC will be responsible for your company's contractors when they are on IPCC's premises. We must be told the names of visitors in advance and they should sign in at reception both on arrival and on departure. Access badges must be displayed by visitors at all times when on the premises and handed in to a member of IPCC staff on departure. Access will not be permitted to anywhere other than the agreed work area.

If a contractor requires access to an area not previously specified, then authorisation must be obtained from their IPCC contact.

In order to make working within the IPCC's premises as smooth as possible, contractors are expected to:

- Provide workers' names in advance.
- Book in and out at reception and obtain an access pass.
- Enter and leave the premises via recognised routes unless specifically authorised to do otherwise.
- Inform his or her IPCC contact in advance of any expected deliveries

- Comply with all instructions relating to health, safety and security.
- Use IPCC telephones only if authorised to do so.
- Never remove any IPCC property without written permission to do so.

Environmental Policy

The IPCC aims to support sustainable development through the following actions:

- Buying energy efficient equipment which achieves value for money.
- Ensuring any products derived from natural resources, such as timber and plants are from sustainable sources and comply with EU and international trading rules.
- Ensuring goods and services purchased rely on minimal use of ozone depleting substances, toxic chemicals and other pollutants including lead, methyl chloroform and formaldehyde;
- Selecting packaging that has maximum recyclability or, where cost effective recycling is impracticable, maximum biodegradability.
- Encouraging manufacturers, suppliers and contractors to improve and develop competitively priced, environmentally friendly products.

Finally

We are always looking for ways to improve our service. So if you have any views, positive or otherwise, on the service that you have received from us, we would like to hear from you.

For more information contact:

The IPCC Procurement Team
90 High Holborn
London WC1V 6BH

procurement@ipcc.gsi.gov.uk

July 2005