

Frequently Asked Questions

Working With Us

What are your terms and conditions?

Power to Change have standard terms and conditions for their contracts which can be found [here](#)

Where do you advertise our tender opportunities?

We always advertise our invitations to tender (ITT) on our webpages at <https://www.powertochange.org.uk/about-us/work-with-us/> and circulate details via our regular newsletters and via our social media channels. You can sign up to receive our newsletters [here](#).

What is the difference between a tender and a contract?

The term tender means a formal invitation to trade under the terms of an offer and the documents associated with that offer. Organisations respond to tender invitation by submitting a bid for the work.

A contract is a legally binding agreement where there has been an offer, acceptance and consideration. The organisation which submits the most suitable bid will be offered a contract.

What is a Framework Agreement?

A framework is where there is more than one contracted organisation chosen to supply goods or services and as these are required the most appropriate organisation can be requested to fulfil the requirement. A framework agreement allows for lots of organisations to be available for work but does not guarantee any work.

Why is the tender process so formal?

The Procurement Regulations govern the tendering process to ensure that all bidders are treated fairly and equitably. We have to ensure that we meet obligations to bidders and also obligations to obtain value for money and effective services; the formal process helps us to meet these obligations.

What is FTS?

FTS stands for the Find a Tender Service, the publication in which all above value contracts from contracting authorities must be advertised.

FTS is only published electronically. Advertisements are published daily in <https://www.findatenderservice.co.uk/> containing calls for tenders, contract awards and pre-information notices.

What is a collaborative bid?

The term *collaborative bid* or *collaborative tendering* takes place when two or more parties agree to work together having identified the benefits that can be achieved by aligning their resources to deliver efficiency and effectiveness without any disturbance to the services to be delivered.

At Power to Change we encourage parties to work together to develop and submit collaborative bids. One of the collaborating parties will need to act as the lead organisation in submitting the tender, making it clear within the bid that this is a collaborative proposal, and setting out who they are working with, who will be delivering which pieces of the work and why they are best placed.

Benefits of Collaborative Bidding

- A better chance of winning with the resource of two or more organisations coming together
- Fewer competitors involved in the tender as they are working together
- Broader range of skills, experience and expertise being brought to the bid
- Sharing costs and risks
- Increased confidence for awarding bodies through a strong collaboration

What makes a successful collaboration?

- Partners need to trust one another and have built/be able to build a good working relationship
- Clear information sharing
- Strong agreement on roles, responsibilities and rewards

Top Tips

- Be open to new learning; you can always learn from other organisations
- Think about your beneficiaries; collaboration can help you reach more people and provide better services. When it's the right thing to do for your beneficiaries then it's the right thing to do for your organisation
- Be patient; collaborative working has great benefits, but it does slow everything down
- Collaboration takes time and requires buy-in from all levels of the organisations involved
- See it as a positive; sharing resources, ideas, and creativity and developing solutions together is a good thing for the sector

Bidding for Work

How do you award contracts for services?

We are committed to applying the principles of fairness, openness and transparency in all our procurement related activity and will seek to award contracts via obtaining at least three quotations or via a formal competitive process for all goods/services over £15,000.

As a publicly funded body, Power to Change has a responsibility to ensure that all its procurement activity is conducted in accordance with the following internal governance rules and statutory obligations:

- [Public Contracts Regulations 2015](#)
- UK Legislation
- Financial regulations of Power to Change
- Procurement policies and procedures of Power to Change

But how do you actually decide which bid is best?

We keep the decision making process as fair as possible.

Most economical advantageous tender is the method by which costs and price are brought into consideration. Lowest price is not always the best option and tenders will be assessed to determine which offers the most economically advantageous tender.

Scoring matrix is where tenders are scored comparatively against each other and a weighted scoring matrix is devised for each tender exercise which will show each offer compared against the specification and assessment criteria. Consequently, this will also show relative comparisons between tenderers. Where a scoring matrix is used, include this in the invitation to tender.

How is the value of a tender assessed?

The contract value is the probable sum payable to the provider over the whole term of the contract. So if we anticipate a piece of work to cost £5,000 a year the value of a 2 year contract would be £10,000.

If there was an option to extend the 2 year contract for a further year, the value would be £15,000.

There are dates on the Invitation to Contract – how important are these?

Absolutely crucial! Bids submitted after the closing date/time for submission will not be accepted so it is essential that you meet the deadline.

What is a clarification question?

If something in the tender is not clear or raises a query, potential bidders may raise this as a clarification question. Clarification questions are anonymised and shared, with the responses, to all potential bidders. This is essential to ensure that everyone has access to the same information.

At Power to Change we publish clarification questions and responses on our webpages and it is the responsibility of potential bidders to check these. We include deadlines for submitting and responding to clarification questions.

What if I want to ask a question after the deadline?

A clarification question submitted after the closing date/time will not be answered as this could give an unfair advantage to a bidder as we provide a date for the last update on

questions so that all bidders have access to the same information before completing their bid.

How much should I write for each question/criterion?

There will often be a word limit set either for each question/criterion or for the whole submission and you should not write more than this. If you write more than the word count your submission can be discounted or the evaluation panel may choose to only read to the count limit.

If the word limit is for the whole submission you can use the weighting to establish where you should write most.

What does the weighting for each criterion mean?

For every tender there will be a number of questions we need to ask to establish how well bidders meet our requirements. The questions we ask will all be important, but some will be more important than others. For example, it is important that all our contractors fit well with our aims and ambitions, but if we are looking for someone to carry out a research project for us their research experience will be more important than their fit. The weighting shows which criteria are most important.

I can't answer one of the questions, what should I do?

Explain why you can't answer the question. Sometimes a question may not be applicable to certain types of companies, for example a sole trader would not be able to provide audited accounts or an anti-slavery statement.

The tender document asks for public liability insurance and I don't have it.

Certain types of insurance policies may be required to deliver certain contracts. We would require any organisation without such insurance to obtain a policy prior to signing a contract with them. If you don't have a particular policy but are willing to obtain one if offered a contract you should put that in your response.

What if I can't get my tender in on time?

This depends on why you are unable to submit to timescales. In the first instance you should contact the Procurement Team **before** the deadline to reach to ask for an extension and to explain why you should be given one. We are not obliged to give you an extension but may consider doing so in certain circumstances.

If you do not submit your tender by the deadline, your tender will not be evaluated. All tenders are opened at the same time to ensure a fair process so you must submit to the deadline.