

## DPS FAQ's

### 1. What is a DPS?

Purchasing in the public sector is highly regulated by UK legislation. The rules are defined by the Public Contract Regulations 2015 legislation.

A Dynamic Purchasing System or DPS is a procurement tool, which creates an approved supplier list that an organisation can access to request quotes and tender for works, services or goods.

The DPS allows suppliers and contractors to bid for projects within the public sector, specifically for the organisation who has implemented the DPS. An increasingly large number of public sector organisations are going down this route, as it allows to create a database of reliable suppliers to address their purchasing needs. The projects that are advertised on the DPS are only available to the suppliers who have been assessed and passed the selection criteria process. It is not visible to suppliers that are not approved.

Depending on the purpose of the DPS, this can be broken down into multiple categories, (sometimes referred to as lots), with the categories being defined based on the nature of the works, services, materials, geographical location, or spend level.

### 2. How do I get on the DPS?

A DPS will be hosted online via a purchasing platform. There are a number of these platforms that are accessed by public & private sector organisations, such as [ProContract](#), [Delta E-sourcing](#) and [inTend](#), to name a few.

When a DPS is set-up this will be advertised, like any other public tender, on the two government websites (i.e. [Contracts Finder](#) and [Find a Tender](#)); where a link to the applicable bidder website is provided. Alternatively, the link to the bidding website can be provided by the organisation setting up the DPS.

For Bromford Housing, once the bidder obtains the link, they are redirected to the hosting platform (ProContract), if they are not registered, they will be required to register as a user. Think of registering to Facebook.

Once registered, the bidder will have access to the documents and start their application to join the DPS.

The application will usually take the form of:

1. The Selection Questionnaire (or SQ): Suppliers and contractors will be required to complete the SQ, which normally takes the form of the Standard Selection Questionnaire (developed by the Crown Commercial Services) or a variation of this depending on the purpose of the DPS. The SQ covers:
  - a. Basic Bidder information -> such as company name, company registration number, etc
  - b. Grounds for exclusions -> Questions asking if there are any grounds to exclude the bidder's application. These generally cover breaches of legislation around money laundering, corruption, fraud, environmental or labour law obligations to name a few.

- c. Economic and Financial Standing -> asks bidders to provide financial information.
- d. Technical & Professional Ability -> asks bidders to provide examples of past contracts for reference checks.
- e. Additional Questions -> which can cover Health & Safety, CDM, or other such requirements that may be specific to the DPS

The above may not be necessary in all circumstances.

2. **Scored Questions:** In some circumstances a DPS might have scored questions, that bidders will need to pass before acceptance onto the DPS. The purpose of the scored questions is to ensure that the resulting suppliers list contains bidders with specific capabilities. The way the scored questions are evaluated is outlined in the Invitation to Tender (or ITT) document. The ITT will detail the specifics of the DPS. This will not be required in all circumstances. Generally, ITT's are issued once a mini-competition or call for competition is conducted.
3. **Supporting Documentation:** Depending on the requirements for the DPS, bidders may be required to provide supporting documentation. This can range from accounts from the past 2 years, accreditations to distribution of workforce. This is not required in all circumstances.

#### Registration

Once bidders have completed all the required questions and have provided their supporting documentation, they will click the "Submit" button.

#### Review

The application is then forwarded to the procurement team who will review and evaluate the responses.

#### Verification

If for any reason the application is unsuccessful, bidders can retry once the issue flagged, has been rectified. The purpose of this is not to exclude suppliers, but to ensure that suppliers that are approved meet the organisation's minimum standard requirements.

### 3. What are the benefits for suppliers?

Some of the benefits of joining the DPS are:

- A) Suppliers will not need to demonstrate their suitability or capability for a project every time they wish to tender.
- B) The approval and onboarding process for suppliers will be a lot quicker, meaning a quicker process to contract commencement.
- C) Beneficial for SMEs as any tender or request for quotations are only submitted to the list of approved suppliers, this increases the chance of SMEs to compete for bids for public sector contracts.

### 4. How does it work?

Once a supplier/bidder has been approved to the DPS, they will get notifications of tenders that are specific to their Lot or category. The frequency and number of tenders will vary depending on the demand for the project or works.

Bidders will then choose if the opportunity advertised is of interest and decide if they want to bid.

Approved suppliers will be asked on an annual basis if they wish to remain part of the DPS, at which point they will need to resubmit their supporting documentation, specifically anything that has expired, and revise their SQ answers if something has changed. Currently, a DPS can operate from anything from 2 to 4 years.

## 5. Bidding through the DPS

When a tender is being advertised, the process usually is as follows:

1. Invitation to Tender/Request for Quotation: documentation for the tender or quote will be published, detailing what the requirements are, what the project specifications that bidders need to adhere to are, what bidders need to do to bid, how the tender or quote will be evaluated and how the contract will be awarded.
2. Due Diligence: Once the documentation is available for viewing, it is the bidder's responsibility to carry out their own due diligence and be sure that they are able to meet the requirements.
3. Pricing: within the documentation provided with the ITT or RFQ, a pricing matrix or a schedule of rates will be present. These will need to be completed and submitted with the bid.
4. Quality: similarly, to the Selection Questionnaire when joining the DPS, for a number of tenders or quotes, quality questions may be asked to evaluate suitability.
5. Submitting the Bid: Once bidders have completed the pricing element and quality questions, if applicable, and have uploaded any supporting documentation, they will then submit their bid.
6. Once evaluated the winning bidder will have to sign a contract. This will be project specific either by Letter or appointment or a Short Form Contract.

When bidding it is important to note, that bidders may have queries or clarification questions regarding the tender or quote. Any clarification questions must be asked within a specific timeframe, which will be outlined in the ITT. All such queries **MUST** be raised on the tendering platform. The procurement team will then review the query and decide if the answer is sensitive and should only be provided to the asking bidder, or to all bidders that are taking part in the tender or quote. As part of the PCR 2015 regulation the buyer (Bromford) will need to be open, transparent, and fair to all bidders.

## 6. Having issues with ProContract?

If suppliers have problems accessing the hosting platform, they will be required to contact the hosting platform provider directly. Details to be found in the ITT.

The organisation setting up the DPS can only help with regards to the DPS, tenders or general queries.