

How to do business with local government

Selling to councils



If you are interested in doing business with councils here are some helpful tips.

If you want to do business with a particular council **search their website** for 'procurement' – most will have a 'selling to the council' or 'doing business with the council' guide detailing how the council will publish their tender opportunities, usually on a tendering Portal.



Higher value tenders (over £25,000) must also be published on the national Contracts Finder portal: **www.gov.uk/contracts-finder**
Most local portals will automatically update this.



Once you have found the local portal then **sign up for free email alerts** for contracts you are particularly interested in. It's worth spending some time on ensuring your 'seller profile' is right so that you are included in alerts for all opportunities.



You can also **sign up to Contracts Finder** if you are interested in seeing opportunities from multiple parts of the public sector, other councils, NHS, and central government.





Councils also buy through a number of **Professional Buying Organisations** (PBOs), for example ESPO, NEPO, YPO, and CCS who all provide expertise and knowledge to assist the sector. It is worth also looking on their websites to see opportunities.

- www.espo.org
- www.nepo.org
- www.ypo.co.uk
- www.gov.uk/government/organisations/crown-commercial-service

Councils also publish **higher value tenders**, currently over £164,000 for goods and services and £4.1 million for works, on the 'official journal of the European Union' or OJEU: <http://ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do>



Councils are subject to the **Public Services (Social Value) Act**. They will be interested in hearing how you can help them to meet their corporate social goals through procurement opportunities. For example, a tender to build a new school might also be considered to provide additional 'social value' if the successful bidder undertakes to employ a number of local apprentices on the build. It is worth considering what additional social value your organisation might bring and setting this out in your bid.

What else?

- Find out about supplier days being held by your local council, usually advertised through their portal or website. Often held in collaboration with the local chamber of commerce.
- Network with other suppliers. How can you collaborate to submit joint bids?
- Be aware of the social value and community benefits your organisation can offer. Highlight these in your bids.
- Get friendly with e-invoicing.
- If you have a complaint about a procurement process that cannot be resolved email: mysteryshopper@crownccommercial.gov.uk

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