

Doing business with the Government of Canada

Presented by Procurement Assistance Canada

Procurement Assistance Canada

- Supports smaller and diverse businesses through the federal procurement process
- Engages, assists and informs businesses on how to sell goods and services to the Government of Canada
- Works to reduce barriers to ensure fairness in the process
- Looks for opportunities to advance supplier diversity through targeted outreach and advocacy

Objectives

- Understanding the procurement process
- Registering your company
- Building networks
- Finding opportunities
- Bidding on opportunities
- Applying for security clearance and screening

Opportunities for smaller and diverse businesses

- Government of Canada is one of the largest buyers of goods and services in Canada
- Buys a wide range of goods and services each year, with contract values ranging from hundreds to billions of dollars
- On average, smaller businesses in Canada win the majority of the total value of contracts awarded each year

Contracting with the Government of Canada

- Public Services and Procurement Canada (PSPC) is the main procurement arm of the federal government
- It is important that all procurement activities be conducted in an open, fair and transparent manner, and that all suppliers have an equal chance at doing business with us
- Federal laws and regulations as well as Treasury Board of Canada policies guide the Government of Canada's procurement process.



Spending authorities within the Government of Canada

- In many cases, departments and agencies will purchase from suppliers directly
 - Departments and agencies have the spending authority to buy:
 - goods up to \$25,000
 - services up to \$2,000,000 and Construction Projects up to \$400,000
- For procurements over these levels, departments and agencies work with PSPC. This is important for you to know, because if you sell goods or services below these amounts, you may wish to directly approach departments and agencies

Registering as a supplier

- Register in SAP Ariba
 - complete your business profile
 - view and respond to opportunities posted to the electronic procurement solution
- Register in Supplier Registration Information (SRI)
 - obtain your procurement business number
 - this number is currently required for bids that are not processed through SAP Ariba
- Register in sourcing tools for professional services, including ProServices and SELECT
- [Learn more about registering as a supplier](#)

Increasing the participation of Indigenous businesses in procurement

- The government is phasing in a minimum target of 5% of federal contracts awarded to Indigenous owned or led businesses
- A set-aside is mandatory for procurements in areas where Indigenous people make up at least 51% of the population
- The government is modernizing the Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business (PSIB) to broaden the definition of “Indigenous business” so that more businesses are eligible
- The sole requirement to qualify for PSIB is 51% Indigenous ownership
- Eligible businesses are encouraged to [register in the Indigenous Business Directory](#)
 - This will allow buyers to identify businesses for set-aside opportunities and meet government objectives to support Indigenous businesses with procurement opportunities

Building networks

- Building relationships can go a long way in becoming a government supplier, just as it does in any line of business

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- Connect with officials in departments and agencies, learn about what directions their department's procurement may be heading, and find out about upcoming procurement opportunities in your region
 - Promote your business and share information regarding your capabilities

Know your business and know your clients

- Who are the appropriate points of contact outside and/or inside government?
 - Find out who does the buying and who the end users are so you can target the appropriate department or agency
 - The [Government Electronic Directory Services \(GEDS\)](#) website provides a directory of most federal public servants across Canada (except for the Department of National Defence, RCMP, and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service)
- [Public Services and Procurement Canada Regional Offices](#) can provide information about opportunities in your area. What does your research tell you about your end user's needs?
 - Find out what the government needs and buys, so that you can clearly show how your business can supply the required goods or services
 - [Search low dollar value procurement history on the Open Government Portal](#) to find information about what government buyers have bought in the past
 - [Search award notices on the Government Electronic Tendering Service \(GETS\)](#) to find information about what the government has bought in your region in the past
 - [Learn about searching for award notices and contract history](#)
- Do you want to be the prime or subcontractor?
 - In some cases, you may want to consider partnering with another company, or becoming part of a larger company's supply chain
 - Depending on your business capacity, subcontracting can be an option to access smaller contracts
- Can you accept payment from the Government of Canada?
 - You may wish to prepare your business to accept payments through various methods including credits cards, since purchase amounts below \$10,000 are often paid by acquisition cards

Other organizations

- Some organizations such as industry associations, regional development agencies can also provide advice and guidance on companies that hold contracts for complex high-dollar value projects

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- They can help you explore whether your company may be able to provide goods and services as part of a prime contractor's supply chain or as part of the Government of Canada's Industrial and Technological Benefit Policy

CanadaBuys.Canada.ca

- CanadaBuys is the official source for Government of Canada tender and award notices
- Visit CanadaBuys.Canada.ca to:
 - search for public sector tenders and contract history
 - register in the electronic procurement solution to view and bid on opportunities

BuyAndSell.gc.ca

- During the transition to CanadaBuys, you will continue to find the following on BuyAndSell.gc.ca:
 - Standard Acquisition Clauses and Conditions (SACC) Manual
 - Procurement applications

Open procurement data

- Knowing what buyers have bought in the past and which companies have been successful selling to them can be useful as you develop your business strategy
- Data on contracts awarded since 2009 are available on the [Open Government Portal](#).
 - Download contract history data for the entire federal government through [Proactive Publication - Contracts](#)
 - Download contract history data for PSPC-managed contracts by [searching for CanadaBuys on the portal](#)
- Contract history and award notices are available through the tenders search on CanadaBuys. For instructions, refer to [Searching for award notices and contract history on CanadaBuys](#)

Low dollar value procurement

- Purchases below \$25,000 for goods, \$40,000 for services and \$100,000 for construction, including all applicable taxes, are considered to be low dollar value procurements
- Unlike larger purchases that are done through the solicitation of bids and quotes from potential suppliers using a tendering process, low dollar value procurements are often direct purchases from vendors
- Low dollar value procurement can present an opportunity to grow your business by developing a business relationship with the Government of Canada through smaller contracts

Competitive procurement

- Procurement over \$25,000 for goods, \$40,000 for services and \$100,000 for construction is done through the solicitation of bids and quotes from potential suppliers using a variety of methods
- The most common types are:
 - a Request for Proposal (RFP)
 - a Request for Standing Offer (RFSO)
 - a Request for Supply Arrangement (RFSA)
- The tender notice will indicate the method of procurement being used and will outline the solicitation documents
- For more information, visit [How procurement works](#)

Note: There are standard policies that apply to all government purchases, whether or not they are explicitly stated in solicitation documents. You can learn more by consulting the [Standard Acquisition Clauses and Conditions Manual](#) (Archived) and [Supply Manual](#).

Standing Offers

- Standing Offers are used to meet recurring needs when departments or agencies are repeatedly ordering the same goods or services
- A RFSO is used to solicit standing offers. Suppliers who meet the evaluation criteria stated in the RFSO become pre-qualified suppliers and holders of standing offers.
- A Standing Offer is an offer from a potential supplier to provide goods and/or services at pre-arranged prices, under set terms and conditions, when and if required
- It is not a contract until the government issues a “call-up” against the standing offer. The government is under no actual obligation to purchase until that time

Supply Arrangements

- Supply Arrangements are used when goods or services are bought on a regular basis but when a standing offer is not suitable because of variables in the resulting call-ups
- Like standing offers, it is not a contract and neither party is legally bound as a result of signing a supply arrangement alone
- They allow client departments to solicit bids from a pool of pre-qualified suppliers for specific requirements
 - This differs from standing offers that only allow client departments to accept a portion of a requirement already defined and priced

Registering to provide professional services

- Centralized Professional Services System (CPSS)
 - ProServices: Information technology (IT) and non-IT professional services
 - Task-Based Informatics Professional Services: Specific information technology services.

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- Task and Solutions Professional Services: Human Resources, business consulting, change and project management
 - Temporary Help Services: Temporary help up to 48 weeks, up to \$400,000. CPSS allows access to opportunities in the National Capital Region (NCR)
 - Opportunities outside the NCR are listed separately
 - Professional Audit Support Services: Services to support internal audit and financial management requirements
 - SELECT: Construction, Architectural and Engineering, and related Maintenance and Consulting services
 - Directory of Linguistic Service Providers (Translation Bureau): Translation, interpretation, terminology and word processes

Collaborative procurement

Provinces, territories and others in the public service can access PSPC standing offers and supply arrangements through the Canadian Collaborative Procurement Initiative (CCPI)

- Benefits for suppliers
 - selling to multiple levels of government
 - expanding your market
 - easier and faster bid preparation
 - increased potential value and scope for each opportunity
 - reduced supply risks
- For more information and to view the list of commodities available, visit Canada.ca/buying-together
- You can also contact the CCPI team by phone (1-800-811-1148) or by [email](#)

Non-competitive procurement

According to Canadian Government Contract Regulations, sole source purchasing can only be undertaken under the following four circumstances

- Pressing Emergency
 - delays could be injurious to public interest
 - example: boats needed for an emergency evacuation
- Cost not exceeding \$25,000
 - not considered cost effective to compete
 - adjusted to \$100,000 for architectural, engineering services as well as international development assistance projects
- Not in Public Interest
 - example: national security
- One Known Supplier
 - examples: copyright, license or patent

Advance Contract Award Notice

- When there is only one known supplier for a requirement (for example when only one company holds the Intellectual Property or for a particular security requirement), a buyer may choose to post an Advance Contract Award Notice (ACAN)
- This is a public notice posted on [Government Electronic Tendering Service](#) allowing other suppliers to signal their interest in bidding on the opportunity and to demonstrate their ability to meet the requirement
- If no other supplier submits a statement of capabilities that meets the requirements set out in the ACAN, the contracting authority may then proceed with awarding the contract to the identified supplier. If one or more suppliers meet the requirements, the contracting authority will then begin a competitive process

Requests for Information

- Requests for Information are an opportunity for businesses to help shape the resulting requirements and provide input into the procurement process
- Requests for Information are also called Letters of Interest
- It is not a bidding opportunity, but is issued in order to solicit information from the bidder community

Bidding on opportunities

- Many Government of Canada contracts are awarded through a competitive process, which requires that you submit a bid
- Requirements can be quite specific, and you will want to make sure that your bid meets all of them and that you offer the best value for money

To bid or not to bid?

- As a supplier, you should ask yourself:
 - Am I capable of offering the service or product requested?
 - Do I meet the evaluation criteria?
 - Am I willing to accept all the terms and conditions?
- If you answered no to any of these questions, then that particular opportunity may not be the one for you

Attention to detail

- Follow the instructions and read all the terms and conditions thoroughly
- Ensure you address ALL of the evaluation criteria. Mandatory requirements are especially important, as only bids that meet these terms and conditions will be further evaluated
- Complete and sign each certification completely and accurately

Ask questions during the procurement process

- Once a statement of work is being prepared, for fairness, you may only communicate with the contracting authority indicated in the solicitation document
- An exception exists for Public-Private Partnerships, where there is competitive dialogue during the procurement process, overseen by a fairness monitor

Submitting your bid

- Know the bid closing date and where and how to submit your bid. Check for amendments to the closing date
 - Bids will NOT be accepted after the date and time indicated
 - For some PSPC tenders, bids can be submitted electronically using [Canada Post's Connect](#) online service
 - Note:** Connect is used only to submit your bid and receive a confirmation email. If you need to contact the contracting authority, follow the communication instructions in the solicitation documents.
 - Tender opportunities posted to the electronic procurement solution require bid submission through SAP Ariba
 - Each procurement opportunity will clearly detail the delivery method to submit a bid. Learn about [responding to opportunities on SAP Ariba](#)
- Ensure your proposal follows the format requested
- Sign the document and include all required signed and completed certifications
- Review your bid, then have someone else review it too
- During the evaluation process, the buyer may contact you for clarification on your bid
 - The evaluation or contract award process will not be delayed, so be sure you respond to any questions by the date and time stipulated in the request

Security requirements

- A security clearance is necessary when a Government of Canada contract requires your personnel to access classified or protected information, assets or sensitive federal work sites
- Security requirements are identified in the solicitation document
- For contracts that require **organization clearance**, you must submit your application for screening when you bid
- For contracts that require **personnel clearance**, you can apply for screening once you have been awarded a contract or qualified for a Standing Offer or Supply Arrangement
- For questions about clearance processes and requirements, contact the [Contract Security Program](#) (CSP)
- For questions about the security requirements of a specific opportunity, contact the contracting authority listed in the solicitation document
- For more information: [Security requirements for contracting with the Government of Canada](#)

Contract Security Program

- The CSP provides security screening of organizations and their personnel for contracts with security requirements
- Security screening ensures that only trusted individuals and organizations with a valid need to know may gain access to:
 - sensitive government information, such as military plans;
 - personal information, such as financial records of Canadians.
- The CSP offers [free webinars about its services](#)
- [Forms for contract security](#).

Mandatory electronic fingerprints

- PSPC requires mandatory electronic fingerprint requirements for its suppliers to meet RCMP criminal record check requirements
- The process applies to any organization that works or intends to work on Government of Canada contracts with security requirements. It also applies to any government who uses PSPC CSP services
- Electronic fingerprinting is required for all levels of security screening requests (reliability status, secret, top secret) and for applicants who need to obtain, update (renewal), or upgrade their personnel security screening clearances issued by PSPC

Mandatory credit checks

- Personnel of organizations working or intending to work on Government of Canada contracts with security requirements require a mandatory credit check
- This requirement comes from the Government of Canada [Standard on Security Screening](#)
- Conducting credit checks as part of the overall assessment helps determine an individual's trustworthiness and reliability to access government information, assets and sites
- A credit check is mandatory for any applicant needing a new security status or clearance or for an update or upgrade of their existing status or clearance
- Applicants will not require a credit check for any transfer requests unless:
 - there is a [change of circumstance](#)
 - the security screening results are more than 5 years old
 - the security screening was not previously done in accordance with the [Standard on Security Screening](#)

For more information on security requirements

- More about [Mandatory electronic fingerprints](#)
- More about [Mandatory credit checks](#)
- PSPC offers [free webinar](#) training for organizations bidding and working on government contracts with security requirements

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- For assistance, [contact the Contract Security Program](#)

Federal Contracting Fraud Tip Line

- Anyone can report suspicious activity in federal contracting including suspected cheating, fraud, collusion and corruption
- All tips are valuable and may be the only way to stop a particular fraud from happening
- Tips can be submitted anonymously by:
 - calling 1-844-365-1616, or
 - completing a protected [online form](#)
- Submitting a tip helps to ensure that all suppliers have an even playing field and the contracting process is fair, ultimately benefitting all Canadians, businesses and taxpayers
- The Tip Line is a partnership between the Competition Bureau, the RCMP and PSPC
- For more information on the types of cheating in federal government contracts and what to include in a tip, visit the [Tip Line website](#)

Starting work

- It is essential to remember that without a contract in place, there is no mechanism for payment by the Government
- Under no circumstance should a supplier begin work until an agreement is in place and signed by the contracting authority
- The Government of Canada is not accountable for paying for any work that has been done prior to the signature of an agreement

Purchase orders

- A purchase order can be used for purchases under \$25,000
- The purchase order will indicate the buyer's requirements and the price they are willing to pay for the good or service
- Once accepted a purchase order becomes a contractual agreement

Payment

- The government has 30 days following receipt of an invoice or receipt of the goods or services, whichever is later, to issue payment before interest accrues
- Government acquisition cards are issued to eligible procurement and administrative officers to permit them to buy very low dollar value goods or services
- The government uses a direct deposit method of payment. Register with individual departments and agencies

Next steps

- [Learn more about registering as a supplier](#)
- [Register for your next seminar:](#)
 - Finding opportunities on the Government Electronic Tendering Service
 - Supplying professional services to the Government of Canada
 - Bidding on opportunities.

Get assistance

If you need help understanding the federal procurement process or registering for a procurement business number:

- contact the National InfoLine 1-800-811-1148 (Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm ET)
- [request a callback](#) from Procurement Assistance Canada; or
- [find a regional office near you](#). We have a network of offices across Canada

Electronic procurement solution

The Government is moving federal procurement online. During this transition, you may be able to bid on some tender opportunities through the electronic procurement solution. [Find out more.](#)

Canada.ca/PAC