



DOING BUSINESS WITH DFAT - 101 Webinar

1. Who is DFAT?

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is the Australian Government Department that helps make Australia stronger, safer and more prosperous by promoting and protecting Australia's interests internationally and contributing to global stability and economic growth. The work of DFAT is broad and varied – we work with international partners and other countries to tackle global challenges, increase trade and investment opportunities, protect international rules, keep our region stable and help Australians overseas.

2. What is Australia's development program?

Australia's development program is an investment in an open, prosperous, and resilient Indo-Pacific. Each year, Australia invests approximately \$4.7 billion to promote sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction in developing countries, with a strong focus on the Indo-Pacific region. The investment is delivered through a series of country, regional, global, and thematic development programs.

3. Where do we deliver Australia's development program?

More information on where we deliver the development program can be found at <https://www.dfat.gov.au/development/where-we-deliver-australias-development-program>

4. Who does DFAT partner with?

Australia's development program is untied, meaning we do not only work with Australian organisations. This means we can partner with the best organisations across the globe. We partner with a number of different suppliers including multilateral organisations, non-government organisations (NGOs), the private sector, academic institutions, partner governments, and the public sector to deliver development outcomes.

5. Are there subcontracting opportunities?

Of the \$4.7 billion development program, approximately \$1.1 billion is spent through open and competitive contracts. Within that \$1.1 billion, approximately \$200 million is delivered through subcontractors. There are many subcontracting opportunities for DFAT funded work through our partners (be it a commercial contractor, an NGO, a university, an International Development Bank, another part of the Australian Government, or with a partner government).

6. What is a contribution / grant?

A contribution / grant is a financial arrangement by the Department (DFAT) to a recipient. The arrangement is to help achieve the policy objectives of the Australian Government and assist and support the achievement of the goals of the recipient. The recipient is required to act in accordance with specified terms and conditions.

The Direct Aid Program (DAP) is a small grants program funded from Australia's development budget run from Australian missions. It has the flexibility to work with local communities in developing countries on projects that reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development consistent with Australia's national interest. See 8(f) below for further information on the DAP program.

7. What is procurement?

Procurement is the process of obtaining or purchasing goods or services. DFAT's Development Procurement, Agreements and Systems branch conducts open and competitive development procurements for contracts over \$500,000.

8. Where do I find contracting or subcontracting opportunities in the Australian development program?

- a. **AusTender** is the Australian Government's procurement information system, where all Australian Government departments must advertise open procurements over \$80,000. They must also list all contracts awarded over \$10,000 on AusTender. This website is not DFAT specific - it lists opportunities from across the whole of the Australian Government.
- b. For business intelligence on DFAT priorities, visit our **Business Opportunities** page. There are three very important tabs for you to look through on this page:
 - i. **Development Procurement Pipeline** lists all the tenders being assessed, the tenders out for bidding, and the design work currently underway which we believe will result in a tender. This is also where you will find the names and contact details of suppliers that have been shortlisted at the Expression of Interest stage. You may wish to email them directly if you are interested in subcontracting with them at the tender stage.
 - ii. **Business Notifications** is where you will find announcements, event advertisements and possible tendering opportunities; and
 - iii. **DFAT Supplier Engagement** page is where you will find our newsletters, upcoming engagement events, links to LinkedIn and AusConnect and other information.
- c. **DFAT Suppliers Network** on LinkedIn, we advertise tenders, events and other information through this network page, become a member today.
- d. **AusConnect** is where suppliers will advertise opportunities for subcontractors and individuals to apply for subcontracting opportunities. There are approximately 80 opportunities advertised on AusConnect every month.
- e. **GrantConnect** is a centralised publication of forecast and current Australian Government grant opportunities and grant awarding information. For Development Grants you will need to search for 'grants' on our DFAT website.
- f. Our **overseas embassies and consulates** web page lists all the embassies and consulates around the world and will lead you to information specific to each country, including the Direct Aid Program.

9. What is the IDCC?

The **International Development Contractors Community (IDCC)** is the formal peak body representing international development consultants and contractors working in the Australian development program. IDCC memberships can be at organisational or individual levels.

10. What is ACFID (Australian Council for International Development)

ACFID is the Australian Council for International Development. It is the peak body for Australian non-government organisations (NGOs), and advocates to improve international development and humanitarian action outcomes.

To contact the Development Partners Engagement Team, you can email – supplier.engagement@dfat.gov.au

UNDERSTANDING DFAT TENDER REQUIREMENTS – 201 Webinar

1. What are the rules and regulations for procurements?

DFAT conducts procurements in accordance with the [Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013](#) (the PGPA Act), and the [Commonwealth Procurement Rules](#) (the CPRs). Achieving value for money is at the core of the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

2. What are the DFAT procurement pathways?

DFAT's Development Procurement, Agreements and Systems Branch leads on all development procurements that are over \$500,000 or that are high risk - typically about 20 procurements a year.

a) Two-step procurement

This is our typical pathway, accounting for 90 percent of our procurements, and among other things it is to encourage and attract new players.

- The first step is a short Expression of Interest (EOI) from organisations who would like to deliver the goods or services.
- Organisations are then evaluated, and suitable organisations are shortlisted.
- The procurement then takes a procurement pause - DFAT runs a collaboration process with the shortlisted organisations. This collaboration can vary from one-on-one sessions, group sessions, to a brief on the status of the project and the emerging context and/or sharing the draft scope of services for comment. Once collaboration is finished a Request for Tender (RFT) is issued through AusTender.

b) One-step procurement

A one-step procurement is a single approach to market through an RFT issued through **AusTender**. A one-step procurement is used when DFAT is approaching the market with a clear understanding of the requirements, and/or the market. Typically, it will be used for more transactional contracts, but can be used when transitioning from one program phase to the next where there is a requirement for continued services with little significant change.

c) Panel procurement

The purpose of establishing a panel is to identify a number of organisations who can deliver a particular good or service against agreed terms and conditions. Once organisations are selected and a panel is established, DFAT is able to procure from the panel of suppliers through a streamlined process. A panel procurement is generally a single approach to market through an RFT issued through **AusTender**.

3. What documentation is needed to submit an Expression of Interest (EOI)?

The requirements of a request for an EOI are lower than that of an RFT. Suppliers are typically only required to demonstrate their capabilities and relevant interest in a four or five page response. There is no requirement for personnel or pricing. Consider it a sales pitch responding to evaluation criteria to give DFAT confidence that you would be able to provide a value for money solution if you were shortlisted. The more you tailor your capabilities to the evaluation criteria and project the more likely you will be evaluated positively.

4. What documentation is needed to submit a Request for Tender (RFT)?

The RFT template includes a variety of response schedules requiring completion to have a compliant submission. These include some or all of the following:

- **Tender Response Schedule 1A – List of partners, projects, personnel and referees.** The tenderer is required to provide a list of all personnel and partners that have been named as participating in its tender to deliver specified services. This includes any named personnel for any named partner. Tenderers are required to provide the names of relevant projects and referees for those projects (no page limits apply).

- **Tender Response Schedule 1B – Proposal to Deliver the Services.** Each procurement has its own evaluation criteria and requirements. This is the section where you address the evaluation criteria and tell us how you plan to deliver the program or project (page limits apply).
- **Tender Response Schedule 2 – Tenderer Statements.** This response schedule is where you provide your tenderer details including your tenderer declaration, outline any proposed confidential information and any contractor non-compliance with the supplied draft contract (no page limits apply).

5. How is my organisation's proposal evaluated?

To be competitive, it is helpful to read the procurement documentation carefully and research a broad range of documents on the latest updates in the country and sector. Ensure that you address the evaluation criteria specifically, demonstrate your claims and pitch explicitly with evidence. Do not assume that requirements for one procurement apply to another.

Understanding the procurement evaluation process will help you write better bids. Evaluation involves:

- Checking bids have conformed with the requirements of the procurement (this includes page limits, answering all questions and compliance with Australian policy and legislation through forms you submit in response to the RFT). If your bid does not conform it may not be evaluated.
- Evaluating the proposal to deliver the services (schedule 1B) against the selection criteria. Each evaluation criteria is equally weighted.
- Suppliers that are short listed following Steps a. and b. proceed to the next stage.
- The Evaluation Committee consider risks and value for money.
- The Committee's recommendation is put forward to the DFAT delegate. The delegate is also provided with information on any risks, organisational viability (including financial viability and due diligence) and performance information on the preferred supplier.

6. What if my lead personnel/expertise are not available to deliver in the required timeframes?

The Evaluation Committee evaluate the supplier/s, not the specific personnel they engage. DFAT is more interested in the capability of your organisation, rather than individuals. In the implementation stage DFAT will manage the supplier, with the expectation that the supplier manages the individuals they engage.

7. What is value for money?

Achieving value for money means getting the best available outcome, considering all the relevant risks, costs, and benefits (over the procurement life cycle). It does not simply mean the 'lowest cost'. Suppliers need to ensure resourcing and pricing reflects the resources and cost of undertaking the activity and to meet the contract outcomes.

8. What if I am unclear about something in the EOI or RFT documents?

If you have a question about a procurement, please email the procurement mailbox listed in the EOI or RFT documentation. DO NOT contact someone you know in the department – it may be considered that you are trying to obtain information that is not publicly available, and your bid may be removed from the process. We will respond to enquiries over email if it is a question that we consider will not be of interest to other bidders, or via an addendum. Addenda are issued through AusTender and it is your responsibility to read Addenda.

9. Can I submit a late response?

AusTender does not accept late bids (even when there are IT issues) nor can a bid that is emailed to the procurement mailbox after the closing date and time be accepted. Consider uploading early and make sure you double check your access and the tender submission requirements well before the closing date.

To contact the Development Partners Engagement Team, you can email – supplier.engagement@dfat.gov.au