SPD FAQs

What is the SPD?

The Single Procurement Document (SPD) is a standard questionnaire which allows bidders to confirm that they meet selection and exclusion criteria, without the need to provide evidence at that stage. This should make the process of bidding for a public contract easier: its purpose is to remove some of the barriers to participation in public procurement, especially for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The SPD must be used for all higher value regulated procurement exercises and it is best practice for regulated (£50k and above) goods and services procurements.

A bidder will be able to re-use a SPD form which it has previously submitted for another competition, so long as the information is still correct.

Do I have to use the SPD?

Yes. Buyers must issue an SPD for procurement exercises over specific values.

The SPD can be used as part of either a single stage or multi stage procedure.

Where an SPD has been provided by the buyer, suppliers must complete the information requested in order to bid for the procurement opportunity.

Where Do I Find a Copy of the SPD?

Buyers will include information on the SPD that you need to complete in the procurement exercise instructions.

The SPD is available in two formats. These are:

- **the PCS SPD Module:** Located in PCS this allows buyers to create their SPD requests electronically
- **the SPD in PCS-Tender:** Here the SPD questions will be built into PCS-Tender by the buyer

You can find out more information on the SPD page.

Do I Need to Complete a New SPD Every Time I Bid?

Yes. Each SPD is configured to suit the requirements of that individual procurement exercise. Therefore bidders will be expected to submit an individual SPD response that relates to those particular questions and requirements each time they bid.

If you are using the SPD via PCS-Tender your responses should be added into PCS-Tender.

If you are using the PCS SPD module, you can add your responses directly beside the questions, within the requirement text boxes.

Where the buyer uses the online PCS SPD module or PCS-Tender, suppliers will be able to store and reuse their answers to the SPD standard questions. However you must ensure that the answers you have stored are still relevant and correct to any future procurement exercise.

Do I Need to Answer Every Question in the SPD?

Yes. The questions included in an SPD have been deemed relevant to the particular procurement exercise. As a result the buyer will be assessing all bidders responses based on these questions.

I Don't Understand Some of the SPD Questions. What Do I Do?

Check the Contract Notice and any other tender documents made available by the buyer to confirm if any of the additional information provided there covers your question.

However never assume what a question is asking: an incorrect response could make the difference between your bid proceeding or not. If you are unsure, please raise a question with the buyer.

How Does the SPD Work?

Stage 1	The contract notice on PCS (Public Contracts Scotland) OR the online SPD Module information on any minimum standards or selection criteria set by the buyer
Stage 2	The SPD is where the bidder will confirm (self declare) that: • none of the exclusion criteria apply • they meet any minimum standards/selection criteria set by the buyer
Stage 3	Only those bidders shortlisted or awarded the contract will be required to provide criteria

Will I Be Asked for Proof that my SPD Self Declaration is True?

By law, a winning bidder has to submit all of the required certificates and documentation before they are awarded a contract. Bidders can be asked to submit their evidence at any point in the procurement process, if this is necessary to ensure that the process is carried out properly. In a Restricted or two-stage procedure, it is likely that those bidders which are shortlisted will be asked to submit their evidence at that stage.

Bidders are not required to submit supporting documentation which an organisation already has in its possession.

What Happens If a Shortlisted or Successful Bidder is Found to Have Misrepresented Itself?

This will depend on what the issue is. Further information is provided below:

- if it emerges that a bidder is actually in one of the situations which is a mandatory ground for exclusion, or if it does not meet one of the minimum selection criteria, then that bidder must be excluded from the competition. Depending on the nature and stage of the competition, that may mean either that it proceeds without that bidder, or that competition should be re-evaluated without that bidder's tender
- if it emerges that a business is in one of the situations which is a discretionary ground for exclusion, then the decision about whether or not to exclude that bidder will be up to the public body, which will have to take a decision which is in line with the Principles of Procurement - transparency, proportionality, equality of treatment and non-discrimination
- if the issue is more administrative in nature e.g. mistakes in providing the documentation, then the authority will have the option of inviting the bidder to supplement or clarify the documentation provided.

Do Sub-Contractors and/or Consotriums Complete an SPD?

Where you are relying on others to meet the selection criteria for your bid (for example you are bidding as part of a consortium or you are using a sub-contractor), you need a separate SPD response from each of the organisations/groups you are relying on to make your bid.

Each organisation/group must complete the exclusion criteria section of the SPD and whichever selection questions you are relying on them for.

If you are using a sub-contractor (but not relying on them to meet the selection criteria) each sub-contractor should complete an SPD response. In this instance, they will only need to complete the exclusion criteria.

The main bidder is responsible for collecting and submitting all of the SPD's required as part of the bid being made.

All of the SPD responses will be evaluated alongside the main bidders' SPD.

How are Completed SPDs Submitted?

The buyer will have specified how to complete and submit the SPD provided i.e. either:

- via the online SPD module in PCS
- via the SPD questions included on-line in PCS-Tender

Where several SPD’s have to be submitted e.g. as a result of relying on a sub-contractor and/or due to being a group bid, it is the responsibility of the main bidder to collate and submit all of the completed SPD documents.

Can Buyers Shortlist?

Yes, buyers can choose to shortlist and take forward the selected bidders to the next stage of the procurement exercise.

If shortlisting the buyer will do this within the Technical and Professional Ability section of the SPD and will detail this in the Contract Notice. This information should include weighting and scoring information and methodology. These criteria must be objective and non-discriminatory.

What is the difference between and SPD and an ESPD?

The SPD has replaced the ESPD in most procurement exercises and there are only some slight changes between the SPD and the ESPD e.g. in terminology.

The SPD is the Single Procurement Document and the ESPD is the European Single Procurement Document. The ESPD was used when the UK was a member state of the EU however since the UK's exit from the EU (and the ending of the trading transition period at 11 p.m. on 31 December 2020) the UK now use the SPD.

In some instances a buyer may ask bidders to complete an ESPD but this will only be when the procurement exercise you are bidding for was advertised before 11 p.m. on 31 December 2020.