

What is eTendering?

eTendering is the use of secure web-based collaborative tools that enables buyers and suppliers to manage their interactions during the tender process online. The tool is fully compliant with EU Procurement Directives and supports the full tender process including advertisement, pre-assessment, expression of interest, pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ), invitation to tender (ITT), reverse auctions and award notices. It can be used for procurements of any category, size, complexity and value, both above and below OJEU thresholds (Official Journal of the European Union).

Why has The Pensions Regulator adopted the eTendering service?

eTendering enables us to streamline our procurement processes, reduce some mandatory procurement timescales for above OJEU threshold requirements by conducting our tender processes online and makes it easier for suppliers wishing to do business with ourselves.

How is the eTendering service being delivered for The Pensions Regulator?

The service is delivered via a secure hosted managed service from a primary service provider, BravoSolution UK.

What are the benefits of eTendering?

For suppliers, advantages include:

- Accessibility – tool is available 24 x 7 x 365
- Reduced procurement timescales for above threshold OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) requirements.
- Reduced costs – responses to tenders are managed securely online; this reduces printing and postage costs.
- Peace of Mind - eliminates worries regarding buyer's receipt of documents within the deadline by giving instant delivery and real-time feedback on the progress of the procurement.

The Pensions Regulator should realise similar advantages and we will also find it easier to access management information and have a centralised audit trail.

The service is hosted by BravoSolution – is the confidential tender information safe?

The service is security accredited in line with government requirements, allowing the service to be used for all procurement documentation, equating to a UK Protective Marking of "Restricted" eGov Level III security.

The service is hosted remotely by BravoSolution; both the application software and data is held on the technology provider's secure servers. All information on the service, and all Buyer and Supplier actions, are recorded and are fully auditable. All data entered and held on the service is encrypted.

There are a number of safeguards built into the service – for instance, we cannot view any supplier's submission until the stated closing date/time for tenders, nor can we make any changes to tenders.

How do Suppliers register for the service?

Registration is designed to be a straightforward process which involves agreeing to the Terms and Conditions of use for the service, selecting a User ID, and then supplying contact details for Business and User Profiles.

Once a new supplier's details have been verified a system-generated password is issued by email. New Users are requested to change their password when they first login, so the system-generated password can be replaced by something memorable to the User. Users are able to manage their own Business and User Profiles within the service, and can change their password at any time.

Do Suppliers have to pay to use the service?

No. The eTendering service and the Helpdesk which supports its use are completely free of charge to all suppliers.

What technology is needed to use the eTendering service? The service is web-based and is designed to be accessible to any buyer or prospective supplier using a computer (PC or Mac) equipped with a dial-up Internet connection and recent mainstream web browser software, such as Microsoft Internet Explorer version 5.5 or Netscape version 6. That means if you are reading this page on the Internet, then you can probably use the service.

The service is designed to be viewed at a display resolution of 1024 x 768 pixels or above.

Will SMEs be able to use the service?

We understand that smaller businesses may have concerns about the technology overhead involved in using the service, and whether they have the necessary equipment or expertise.

In order to help you use the service we provide a telephone helpdesk, free of charge, to all prospective suppliers. If you are unsure about your technical ability to use the service, or if you want help at any time during the process of registering for or using the service, then please call the free helpline number: 0800 368 4850.

What if I can't use the eTendering service? Can I still tender?

Because of the advantages of eTendering, we hope to use the service as widely as possible. We envisage that there will be few instances when the traditional paper based method is reverted to, however, if there are reasons why you cannot use eTendering, please let us know and we will consider how best to overcome your difficulties.

If you require any help with the BravoSolution Portal, please contact the eTendering Helpdesk on free phone 0800 368 4850 or via e-mail help@bravosolution.co.uk