



**London Borough
of Hounslow**

**SELLING TO THE
LONDON BOROUGH OF HOUNSLOW**

**A GUIDE FOR SUPPLIERS
JUNE 2011**

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1. THE LONDON BOROUGH OF HOUNSLOW

The London Borough of Hounslow is an outer London borough situated in west London. It extends along the A4 and M4 'corridor' between Hammersmith in the east and Heathrow Airport in the west.

The population of Hounslow is around 218,600 (latest ONS estimate). There is a rich mix of communities; about one third of the population of Hounslow is comprised of people from minority communities.

The borough is an important business location and attracts major global companies within its boundaries. In addition, Heathrow Airport, situated on the western borders of the borough is also a significant employer.

Hounslow Council is based at the Civic Centre, Lampton Road, Hounslow and other sites throughout the borough. It spends in excess of £100 million per annum on goods, works and services. It encourages all businesses to interact with the Authority and to that end regularly places public notices concerning upcoming contracts on OJEU, on its website, on Contracts Finder or in the local press. The council would like to engage with local small and ethnic minority businesses and encourage them to bid for the council's contracts.

2. INTRODUCTION – DOING BUSINESS WITH THE COUNCIL

The council is keen to encourage a diverse range of contractors and suppliers, both large and small and has created this guide to provide key information about the council in terms of what it buys (goods, services and works) and how (seeking quotes, inviting tenders, etc)

3. WHAT THE COUNCIL PURCHASES

The council buys a huge range of goods, services and works. The list below includes some of the common purchases of the council.

- Agency staff.
- Furniture.
- Highways maintenance.
- Utilities.
- Telecoms.
- Stationery and computer consumables.
- Consultancy services.
- Facilities management.
- Building works & maintenance.

- Banking and insurance services.
- Cleaning and catering.
- Protective clothing.
- Care services for children and older people including those with disabilities and mental health needs.
- Vehicles.
- IT hardware and software.
- Training.

4. FINDING OUT ABOUT CONTRACTS

There are a number of ways to find out about current contracting opportunities within the council.

4.1 The council seeks to ensure that it meets its legal obligations when advertising contracts and uses the following framework:

Item	Value	Advertising (examples)
Goods and services	Over £156,442	Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) http://ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do London Borough of Hounslow website www.hounslow.gov.uk
	Below £156,442	London Borough of Hounslow website www.hounslow.gov.uk Contracts Finder www.businesslink.gov.uk/contractsfinder
	Below £30,000	At least 3 competitive quotes
Works	Over £3,927,260	Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) http://ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do London Borough of Hounslow website www.hounslow.gov.uk
	Under £3,927,260	Pre-qualified suppliers on Constructionline www.constructionline.co.uk

In addition to the above, contract notices may also be placed in relevant trade magazines and local papers.

All public tenders greater than the EU thresholds (except Part B) must be published in the Supplement to the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) and

published throughout the EU. Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) is updated every day and published in 11 languages: <http://ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do>

Contracts Finder is a government-backed service designed specifically to give Companies easy access to lower value contract opportunities (typically under EU thresholds or Part B Services) offered by the public sector. The portal brings buyers and suppliers together for the first time and is the first port of call for lower-value business opportunities. www.businesslink.gov.uk/contractsfinder

Details of all contracting opportunities are listed on the London Borough of Hounslow's website [Current tenders](#). See also [Forthcoming Opportunities](#).

5. TENDERING FOR THE COUNCIL'S BUSINESS

The council is using public money and therefore has a responsibility to ensure that it is spent wisely. U.K Legislation and European Directives regulate Public Sector Procurement. The objectives of these Regulations are fairness, transparency and competition. Tendering for a contract is carried out in one of the following ways:

Open – a single stage process where tenders are issued to all who express an interest.

Restricted – a two-stage process where a shortlist of tenderers is prepared for the purpose of inviting bids.

Negotiated – a process used only in certain circumstances, e.g. where only a single supplier exists or contract requirements cannot be fully defined.

Competitive Dialogue – a dialogue with a number of potential suppliers that may request to participate with the aim of developing one or more suitable alternatives capable of meeting the contracting authority's requirements and on the basis of which the chosen candidates are invited to tender.

5.1 Process

Interested organisations will need to respond to the advertised opportunity by submitting a request to participate in accordance with the contract notice.

Under the open procedure, invitations to tender will be sent to all organisations that submitted a request to participate. If using one of the other procedures (restricted, negotiated and competitive dialogue), applicants will be sent a questionnaire to complete to enable the council to pre-qualify organisations to tender.

Companies will be asked to provide details by way of completing a Pre qualification questionnaire (PQQ) for assessment in the following areas:

Financial Information – This is used to assess the financial position of the company in relation to the size of the contract and to check that it is registered (if appropriate) for tax considerations.

Technical Capability and Experience – We ask about the relevant experience and technical ability to carry out the categories of work or type of service required. Also, we would normally ask further specific questions tailored to the need of the individual contract. References for similar works undertaken will also be requested at this stage.

Health and Safety – In respect of works and construction, all organisations will be required to submit a Health and Safety Policy signed by an authorised person, which relates to Health and Safety legislation.

Equalities – Hounslow Council strongly supports equal opportunity, equal access and positive outcomes for all sections of the community. As a result the council assesses a company's compliance with the Equality Act 2010, Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 and the commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice, the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Sustainability – Hounslow Council is committed to the sustainable development of the borough, a fundamental objective of which is the protection and enhancement of the environment. Organisations that the council deals with will be expected to have similar levels of commitment.

5.2 Preparing Your Tender Submission

If your organisation is invited to tender, full details of the specification, contract terms and conditions and related documents will be issued.

Organisations wishing to prepare a tender submission will need to submit formally pricing and method statements for the contract.

When tendering, it is acceptable to submit written enquiries regarding your submission or to ask genuine questions about any aspect of the process. It is the council's policy to seek written questions (e-mail being the preferred method). It should be noted that all queries and their responses will be circulated to all potential bidders. Telephone enquiries are discouraged (except where specifically invited). Lobbying for information from Officers of the council or councillors is not acceptable. See Point 9 below.

5.3 The Evaluation Process

5.3.1 Evaluation Panel

The successful contractor or supplier will be the one that, in the opinion of the council, submits the most economically advantageous tender, i.e. scores best overall in the evaluation of both quality and price. All competing tenders are assessed against the same criteria, which will have been established before tenders are opened. The evaluation panel will normally consist of three or more officers.

5.3.2 Interviews and Presentations

At any time during the tender process, contractors may be invited to give a presentation or attend an interview as part of the tender procedure.

5.4 Timeliness in Tendering

Completed tender documents must be returned to the council by the date and time stipulated. In order to be fair to all companies, only in exceptional circumstances will time extensions be granted. Tenders received after the deadline will not be considered.

5.5 Contract Award

A contract is awarded as soon as possible after the evaluation process has been completed and authorisation for award has been obtained.

5.6 Debriefing

The council recognises the importance of providing useful feedback and will provide a full breakdown of the areas of your response where you have not scored as highly as the winning tenderer. Please note that the council will always seek to ensure that it does not knowingly breach any current legislation during the feedback process.

6. CONTRACT TERM

The contract term for each contract will be specified in the tender documentation.

7. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The London Borough of Hounslow uses its own terms and conditions of contract or industry standard contracts e.g. ICE and JCT.

8. WHOM TO CONTACT IN THE COUNCIL

For advice on Procurement and Tendering, please e-mail your enquiry to procurement@hounslow.gov.uk

9. PROPRIETY

The council's employees follow a strict code of procurement ethics. Neither gifts nor offers of hospitality from individuals or organisations with whom the council has or may have in the future a contractual relationship can be accepted.

10. PAYMENT POLICY

Payment terms will normally be set out in the contract documents. Payment will normally be made within 30 days net of receipt of an accurate invoice. In order to ensure that your payment is dealt with efficiently, you must;

Submit the invoice in the format agreed in the Contract or Purchase Order.

Quote a Purchase Order Number and/or Contract title.

Address the invoice to the correct officer and location.

The council's payment method is by BACS

11. MANAGEMENT OF CONTRACTS

The council values its relationships with its suppliers and believes that contract award is only the beginning of a successful partnership.

12. USEFUL WEBSITES

Useful external links

London Contracts and Supplies Group: www.lcsg.org

OGCbuying.solutions is an Executive Agency of the Office of Government Commerce in the Treasury and provides information and services: www.ogcbuyingsolutions.gov.uk

Equal Opportunities Commission offers information on gender equality issues: www.eoc.org.uk

Disability Rights Commission provides information on disability issues: www.drc-gb.org

Commission for Racial Equality offers Information on race equality issues: www.cre.gov.uk

Constructionline - This is a co-ordinated National Pre-Qualification Services, owned by the Department of Trade and Industry and supported by the Office of Government Commerce and the Department for Communities & Local Government. www.constructionline.co.uk

CHAS - (Contractors Health and Safety) Scheme is a nationwide scheme for the public sector setting standards in Health and Safety: www.chas.gov.uk

Contracts Finder is a government-backed service designed specifically to give companies easy access to low-value contract opportunities offered by the public sector. www.businesslink.gov.uk/contractsfinder

Fit to Supply is a procurement and supply chain development initiative to enable food, IT, construction and health & social care enterprises from Black and minority ethnic communities to supply private & public sector organisations. www.fittosupply.org

Business Link for London is part of the national Business Link network - delivers impartial, expert and practical business advice to London's small and medium-sized businesses. www.businesslink4london.com

The West London Alliance (WLA) comprises the boroughs of Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow. www.westlondonalliance.org

13. YOUR FEEDBACK

Please send any comments to:

Corporate Procurement Unit
London Borough of Hounslow
Civic Centre
Lampton Road
Hounslow
TW3 4DN

E-mail: procurement@hounslow.gov.uk