



Crown
Commercial
Service

Contracts Finder User Guide

Public Sector Contractors Supply Chain Notices



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1. Introduction

Encouraging suppliers to offer wider access to procurement opportunities can open up access to a more diverse supply base, particularly SMEs, encourage innovation and contribute to UK growth.

CCS committed to extend the successful Contracts Finder service to the sub-contracting market in 2016 to provide a route for public sector contractors to engage with the market and build new supply chain partnerships.

This user guide provides information for contractors to government and the public sector on use of Contracts Finder.

Contracts Finder allows users to view and search opportunities that are currently open to tender, pipelines of potential procurement activity and awarded contracts.

It also has a facility for public sector contractors to engage with the supply chain to check interest in and define future procurement needs ('Future opportunity' and "early engagement notices"). It also enables contractors to publish awarded opportunities to provide greater visibility of the supply chain.

Feedback from our market research indicates that using Contracts Finder to advertise opportunities is most effective in the following circumstances:

- To signal early to the market that you are likely to be tendering for an upcoming procurement.
- To seek supply chain partners in niche areas where you don't currently have existing provision.
- To seek supply chain partners as you explore and enter new and emerging markets.
- To build supply chain partnerships or consortia when bidding for a public sector contract
- To support the delivery of public sector contracts.

Contracts Finder is a critical part of delivering the government's commitments for transparency in procurement and for making it easier and more accessible for smaller businesses and voluntary or charitable organisations to do business with the public sector.

We would welcome feedback from Public Sector Contractors who are making use of the system.

2. Getting started: registering and signing in

Contracts Finder is available at: <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search>

Normally you will be asked by a government department to register. If a government department has asked you to register, please let them know when you have completed the process, using the proforma at annex 3, as they will confirm approval to CCS, which will speed up your application.

[Apply to post supply chain notices – existing users](#)

If your company is already registered on Contracts Finder, first login to your Contracts Finder account. From your Contracts Finder dashboard, select “[Apply to post supply chain notices](#)”. You will be prompted to confirm this action. Once confirmed you’ll see a notification in your dashboard telling you your application has been sent.

The screenshot shows the GOV.UK Contracts Finder dashboard. At the top, there is a black header with the GOV.UK logo and 'Contracts Finder' text. Below the header, a blue bar contains a 'BETA' notice and the user's name 'Joanna Dale - CCS CF Supplier'. Navigation links for 'Search', 'Go to your dashboard', and 'Sign out' are visible. A breadcrumb trail shows 'Home > Your dashboard > Manage your saved searches'. The main content area is titled 'Manage your saved searches' and includes the instruction 'View, edit or delete your saved searches, and customise email alerts.' A light blue box states 'You have no saved searches'. To the right, a 'Quick links' section contains two links: 'Apply to post supply chain notices' and 'Apply to post public sector notices'. At the bottom right, there is a 'Manage your settings' link.

Note. The option, “[apply to post public sector notices](#)” is for private companies acting as agents to the public sector to enable them to undertake public procurement on behalf of their public sector clients. Some organisations may undertake a mix of public and private sector procurement. In such cases, you may apply to publish both sets of notices.

Registering for a buyer account – new users

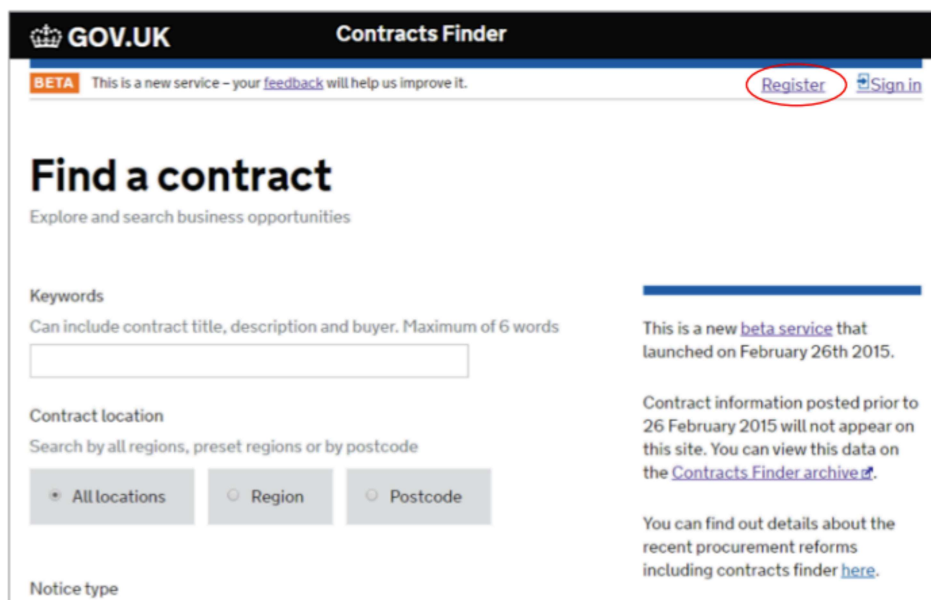
Contractors who are not already registered on Contracts Finder and who wish to publish notices must register.

Why register? Case Study – Servest Innovation Day

On 13th March 2017, Servest Group Ltd published a notice on Contracts Finder to generate interest for Servest's Innovation Day. Servest's Innovation Day is a quarterly event, whereby any company can apply to attend and showcase an innovative idea/product – the Innovation Committee then carefully analyse all applicants and choose the companies that they wish to see on the day. There are usually around six places.

In total, the advert on Contracts Finder received 1653 views and generated a huge response, over 130 applicants were received of which, the quality and variety of submissions was very high. When asked about where the applicants found out about the innovation day, 1/3 of the 123 respondents indicated that the applicants found about Servest's Innovation Day through Contracts Finder – a very positive result.

To register, click on the link at the top right hand side of the page:



The screenshot shows the GOV.UK Contracts Finder website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the GOV.UK logo and the text "Contracts Finder". Below this, a "BETA" badge is visible with the text "This is a new service - your feedback will help us improve it." In the top right corner, there are two links: "Register" and "Sign in". The "Register" link is circled in red. The main content area features a "Find a contract" section with the subtitle "Explore and search business opportunities". Below this, there are search filters for "Keywords", "Contract location", and "Notice type". The "Keywords" section includes a text input field and the instruction "Can include contract title, description and buyer. Maximum of 6 words". The "Contract location" section has three radio button options: "All locations", "Region", and "Postcode". On the right side of the page, there is a notice stating "This is a new beta service that launched on February 26th 2015." and another notice stating "Contract information posted prior to 26 February 2015 will not appear on this site. You can view this data on the Contracts Finder archive." and a link to "here" for more details about procurement reforms.

Step 1 – Select “Buyer”, then click “next”

[Home](#)

Step 1 - Choose type of organisation

Please select the organisation type you wish to register

Supplier
To search and apply for notices

Buyer
To post notices

[Next](#)

[Cancel](#)

Step 2 – Select “Contractor to the Public Sector” then click “next”

[Home](#) > [Step 1 - Choose type of organisation](#)

Step 2 - Choose type of buyer

Your request to post notices will be considered, and you will be informed of the decision by email

Public sector buyer
To undertake public procurement

Private sector buyer
To undertake procurement on behalf of the public sector or to provide transparency of how public funding is spent

Contractor to the public sector
To advertise for sub-contractors to support delivery of public contracts

[Next](#)

[Cancel](#)

Then complete the registration form and click “**submit**”

You will not be able to begin publishing notices immediately, as all registration requests are submitted to the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) for approval.

This is to ensure that appropriate data access controls are enforced. Once your registration has been approved you will receive an email containing an activation link that you must click to complete the registration process (usually within 4 days).

Contracts Finder uses the SID4Gov service as its registration portal, so your activation email will refer to 'SID4Gov' registration rather than Contracts Finder.

Please monitor your inbox and any check any spam folders if the activation email hasn't arrived after 4 days. If you have got any problems with registering or signing in, contact our helpdesk on: ContractsFinder@crowncommercial.gov.uk

Signing in

Once you have your login details click on the link at the top right hand side of the page. Enter your login details (user name and password) on the next page.

If you have forgotten your password, click on the "**Forgotten your Password**" link to reset it. Once you have signed into Contracts Finder you will be taken directly to your dashboard.

Sign in

Sign in or [create an account](#).

Email

Password

[Sign in](#) [Cancel](#)

[Forgotten your Password?](#)

3. Your dashboard

Your dashboard is the part of the site where you can view, publish and manage your own and your organisation’s notices, and manage your settings and profile.

[Home](#) > [Your dashboard](#)

Your dashboard

Your organisation currently has **2** draft notices and **6** published notices.

Your organisation's notices [Your notices](#)

Search
Search your organisation's notices 

Notice type: Notice status: Sort by:

Quick links

- [Create a single supply chain notice](#)
- [Upload an XML file](#)

Manage your settings

- [Email preferences](#)
- [Saved searches](#)
- [Watched notices](#)

Your profile

You can access this page from elsewhere on the site at any time by clicking on the **Go To Your Dashboard** link – this will be at the top right hand side of the page.

The main part of the page is where you can see the notices that have been created. “**Your notices**” tab contains notices last edited by you. “**Your organisation’s notices**” tab contains all notices created by everyone in your organisation.

Quick links is where you can publish notices on Contracts Finder – see section 4 for more details.

Manage your settings allows you to set, manage and edit preferences for email alerts, saving searches and watched notice functions.

Your profile allows you to change the specified features of your profile and contact details.

Search you can enter keywords to search for a particular notice that you want to update.

Use the drop down boxes to filter by ‘**Notice type**’ or ‘**Notice status**’, and use the ‘**Sort by**’ drop-down to sort your notices.

Tip: Can't see your dashboard?

If you are signed in but cannot see the above dashboard view, first, try this **link** <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/dashboard> (copy & paste into your browser. Note. The link will not work if you are **not** signed in). If that still doesn't work, for assistance you can contact: **ContractsFinder@crownccommercial.gov.u**

4. Publishing a notice

Types of notice

Four types of notice can be published on Contracts Finder:

1. **Early engagement:** inviting feedback from industry on early procurement ideas (also known as ‘pre-procurement dialogue’). You can use this to advertise supplier industry events, open invitations to suppliers to bring new and innovative services to your attention, etc.
2. **Future opportunities:** information on procurements that are likely to be published in the future. The notice can be used to indicate when you may wish to refresh existing frameworks, approved supplier lists or contracts. You can convert a future opportunity to a live opportunity.
3. **Opportunities:** live invitations to tender. You can use these to seek supply chain partners to bid for open public sector opportunities, or to tender for subcontracts in support of delivering a public sector contract that you have won.
4. **Awarded contracts:** procurement opportunities that have been awarded to a supplier/suppliers. You can update opportunity notices to indicate who has won the business or create new awarded opportunity notices to publish lists of pre-approved suppliers to provide greater transparency of your supply chain.

How to publish a notice

There are three ways to publish a notice on Contracts Finder:

1. The ‘**Create a single supply chain notice**’ function on your dashboard allows you to create individual notices of any type in a consistent way.
2. The ‘**Upload an XML file**’ feature, also on your dashboard, is suitable for uploading multiple (50+) notices in one go.
3. The **Contracts Finder API** is used by public sector procurement portal providers who are feeding data directly to Contracts Finder. Please contact CCS if you are a portal provider and wish to use this method.

All notices published on Contracts Finder should follow the GOV.UK style guide: <https://tinyurl.com/z5k6jwb>

This is summarised in Annex 1.

Make sure the details you include within your notice are accurate, complete, truthful and not misleading. Any issues with information quality in a notice can be reported by users to the CCS Mystery Shopper scheme via a link on each notice page.

‘Create a single supply chain notice’ function

This is the most commonly used method of creating a notice on to Contracts Finder, and is available in the ‘**quick links**’ panel on the right hand side of your dashboard. Click on **create a single supply chain notice**.

A pop-up window will appear, asking you to select the type of notice you want to create.

You can also download printable pdf templates for all notice types to help you through the process (although note that notices can only be submitted online).

Click on the type of notice you want to publish, then scroll down and click on: **Create notice**

You will be taken to a single summary page of the notice where you can easily navigate to different sections of the notice to edit them.

If you are creating a notice from scratch we recommend that you use the green button

Continue to Summary information

at the bottom of the summary page to start the notice and progress through the pages in order using the green buttons. On each page you can save and view your notice as you go along. You cannot publish a notice until all mandatory information has been completed.

Missing mandatory information is highlighted by a **red** outline around the box and you will be unable to progress to the next page/previous page without correcting this.

The required information is slightly different for each notice type, as summarised in the following table and described in detail in Annex 2.

Page	Notice type			
	Awarded contract	Opportunity	Future opportunity	Early engagement
Summary information	✓	✓	✓	✓
Value information			✓	
Location & industry	✓	✓	✓	✓
Description	✓	✓	✓	✓
Contact details	✓	✓	✓	✓
Attachments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Award information	✓			
Review & publish	✓	✓	✓	✓

You can click on **“view notice”** to view a copy of how your notice will appear once it is published on the site. Supply chain notices are denoted by the orange label, which appears in the search results as well as on the notice page.

Test

CCS CF SAB

Closed opportunity - This means that the contract is currently closed. The buying department may be considering suppliers that have already applied, or no suitable offers were made.

Contract summary

Industry

Agriculture and Food, Materials and Products

Location of contract

North West

Value of contract

--

Published date

06 July 2017

Closing date

04 July 2017

Contract start date

12 July 2017

Contract end date

26 July 2017

SUPPLY CHAIN
NOTICE

Watch this notice

Print this notice

Closing date: 04 July 2017

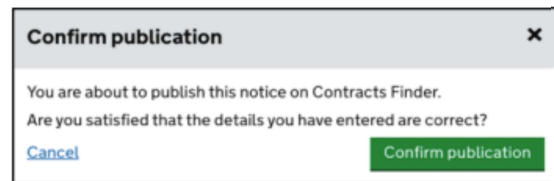
Private procurement rules

Supply chain notices are business-to-business transactions and are not bound by the same rules and restrictions as public sector contracts. The UK government is not responsible for the conduct of such procurement.

Private Procurement Rules - Standard text highlighting the business-to-business nature of the contract is included automatically on all supply chain notices.

Before you publish make sure that:

- all details are accurate
- key words and phrases are spelled correctly
- instructions on how to respond to the notice are clear and concise
- any links to websites and email addresses work properly
- the notice status is correct.



Use **'Edit'** to go back and make any changes.

When you are happy that all information is correct, select **'confirm publication'** to make this notice live on Contracts Finder.

Quick links

[Create a single supply chain notice](#)

[Upload an XML file](#)

Manage your settings

[Email preferences](#)

[Saved searches](#)

[Watched notices](#)

Your profile

'Upload an XML file' feature

You can publish multiple notices on Contracts Finder at the same time using the XML upload feature. This should only be used for bulk uploads.

The XML file upload option is available in the **'Quick Links'** panel on the right hand side of your dashboard. When you click on **"upload an xml file"**, the pop-out screen provides instructions on how to complete and upload the XML file.

On your first time using this feature you can click on **"download the xml template"**. You will need to be familiar with extensible mark-up language (XML code) to be able to use this feature as technical support is not available.

The template includes all the fields that can be populated across all notice types. Note that for each record you will need to only include the information that is appropriate for the notice type you are publishing.

Upload an XML file



You can publish several notices on Contracts Finder at the same time.

To do this you can:

1. [download the XML template](#)
2. fill in your notice information and save the file.
3. return to this dialog
4. select the file using the 'Choose file' button.
5. upload the new file to Contracts Finder using the 'Upload' button.

Choose File No file chosen

[Cancel](#)

Upload

5. Managing published notices

There are options to modify notices as follows:

Copy a notice (available for all notice types)

Duplicate a notice by selecting “**copy notice**”. You will be asked to enter a new reference for the copied notice, and then will be able to edit the details as needed. When copying an **awarded** notice you are given the option to:

- **create a new award**,
- **create an opportunity** or
- **create a future opportunity** from the awarded notice details.

Edit a notice (available for all notice types)

Select the “**edit notice**” link – this will open the notice in a new page where you can edit the information, then re-publish the notice.

If you edit a notice, but don't re-publish it before quitting a session, a draft notice is created which holds any changes made to that notice. The notice on the live site remains unchanged.

You will then see that editing options on your published notice will be greyed out. This indicates that a draft already exists. Look in the drafts section of your dashboard to continue editing the notice. Once you have re-published, the draft will no longer be visible and your published notice will reflect the changes made. It will no longer have edit options greyed out.

Delete a notice (draft notices only) or **withdraw a notice** (open notices only)

You can **Delete** a draft notice or **withdraw** a published notice that you have previously created. You will be asked to provide a reason for the notice's withdrawal.

Convert a notice (available for open future opportunities only)

Click on **Convert notice** to convert a Future Opportunity notice into a 'live' opportunity without having to re-enter much of the data already included.

Award a notice (available for closed opportunities only)

Click on “**Award notice**” to create an award notice from a closed notice. It will tell you that you are about to create a duplicate notice. This is fine. You don't need to enter a new reference, as this will be automatically completed for you.

All previous information from when you originally published the notice will be retained in the new award notice and you will be taken directly to the award details page. Complete the fields and add the details of the supplier (or suppliers) that have been awarded the contract, you can indicate if each supplier is an SME or VCSE. If unsure, leave the boxes unchecked. You can attach a copy of the contract and any related documents to your notice.

Re-award a notice (available for awarded notices only). The link allows you to retain the relevant information from the previous awarded contract notice with the ability to edit the original content where needed.

Annex 1

Notices published on Contracts Finder should follow the GOV.UK style guide as closely as possible:

<https://tinyurl.com/z5k6jwb>

Using the style guide helps to provide a more consistent approach to publishing procurement notices on Contracts Finder, with the added benefits of:

- allowing the Contracts Finder search engine to work more effectively
- optimising the user experience so that both buyers and suppliers can get the most out of Contracts Finder.

Common areas to watch out for are:
Ampersand Use 'and' rather than '&', unless it's a department's logo image.
eg, etc and ie Do not use full stops after or between these notations.

Capitalisation DON'T USE BLOCK CAPITALS FOR LARGE AMOUNTS OF TEXT AS IT'S QUITE HARD TO READ.

Lower case is preferable but use capitalisation for:

- departments (specific government departments)
- job titles, ministers' role titles, eg Minister for Housing, Home Secretary
- titles eg Mr, Mrs, Dr, the Duke of Cambridge (the duke at second mention); Pope Francis but the pope
- buildings
- place names
- brand names
- The Earth (ie our planet), Planet Earth and Earth sciences
- faculties, departments, institutes and schools
- names of groups, directorates and organisations, eg Knowledge and Innovation Group

- titles of specific acts or bills, eg Housing Reform Bill (but use 'the act' or 'the bill' after the first time you use the full act or bill title)
- names of specific, named government schemes known to people outside government, eg Right to Buy, Queen's Awards for Enterprise
- specific select committees, eg Public Administration Select Committee
- header cells in tables eg Annual profits
- titles of publications (and within single quotes)

Remember don't capitalise the following:

- government
- never Government, even when referring to an elected administration, (so not the Afghanistan Government) unless part of a specific name, eg Local Government Association
- civil service
- minister
- never Minister, unless part of a specific job title, eg Minister for the Cabinet Office
- department or ministry
- never Department or Ministry, unless referring to a specific one, eg Ministry of Justice
- group and directorate, unless referring to a specific group or directorate, eg the Commercial Directorate
- departmental board, executive board, the board
- policy themes
- eg sustainable communities, promoting economic growth, local enterprise zones general mention of select committees (but do capitalise specific ones see above)
- the military

Annex 2

Information required for notices published on Contracts Finder

The information required for each notice type is described below, with the table under each sub-heading showing which notice types that section/field applies to.

1. Summary Information

Field	Early engagement	Future opportunity	Opportunity	Awarded opportunity
Your reference	✓	✓	✓	✓
Notice title	✓	✓	✓	✓
Approach to market date		✓		
Closing date			✓	✓
Contract start date		✓	✓	✓
Contract end date		✓	✓	✓
Is notice linked to another notice?		✓	✓	✓
Is notice suitable for SMEs		✓	✓	✓
Is notice suitable for VCSEs		✓	✓	✓
Lowest value			✓	✓
Highest value			✓	✓
Contract type			✓	✓
Procedure type			✓	

Description of fields

- [Your reference](#)

Create a unique reference for your notice – your organisation may have a specific format or process for this.

- [Notice title](#)

The title should summarise the nature of the notice and make it easy for suppliers to quickly understand what it involves. You have 300 characters available so ensure that the title is meaningful and short, using similar keywords to those suppliers will use to search for your notice.

- [Approach to market date](#)

This is only required for future opportunity notices. The notice will remain open on Contracts Finder until the approach to market date has passed.

- [Closing date](#)

This is required for opportunity notices. The notice will remain open until the closing date has passed. If you enter a closing date that is in the past, the notice will appear as closed when it is published on Contracts Finder.

- [Contract start and end dates](#)

These are the planned start and end dates for the contract that may result from this notice. If this isn't confirmed, you should provide an estimate. Early engagement notices do not require contract start and end dates.

- [Is notice linked to another notice?](#)

You can use this field to indicate whether the subcontracting opportunity is related to a public sector contract that you plan to bid for or that you have already won.

- [Is notice suitable for an SME/ Is notice suitable for VCSEs?](#)

You can indicate whether you think your opportunity will be suitable for either SME or VCSEs.

- [Lowest and Highest values](#)

Include the expected lowest and highest value range for this contract. If you are unable to provide a highest value, a lowest value will be sufficient. For future opportunities, this information is requested in the next section of the notice.

- [Contract type](#)

Use the dropdown options to select the appropriate contract type.

Note. The Contract types of Works, Services and Supply are EU definitions for use when advertising public sector contracts above the thresholds for EU wide advertisement (OJEU).

Suppliers should use '**Not applicable**'.

- [Procedure type](#)

Use the dropdown options to provide the appropriate procedure type. The procedure types are EU definitions for use when advertising public sector contracts above the thresholds for EU wide advertisement (OJEU). There are also a selection of non-OJEU procedures.

When advertising new supply chain opportunities you should use ‘**Open- non OJEU**’ if you intend to invite all interested parties to quote for your requirement and “**Competitive Quotation- non-OJEU**” if you intend to narrow down the field of bidders for example through some kind of prequalification process before inviting the to quote.

2. Value information- future opportunities only

- **Value range**

Include the expected lowest and highest value range for this contract. If you are unable to provide a highest value, a lowest value will be sufficient.

- **Spend profile by financial year**

Future opportunities are used to provide early sight of upcoming requirements. To help suppliers with capacity planning, a spend profile can be provided which sets out the anticipated annual spend over the term of the contract. You must provide information for at least one financial year, but you should add as many years as you have information for by clicking on ‘Add to table’ for each new financial year. Financial year needs to be entered in the format YYYY/YYYY and Budget (£) in the format of a number.

3. Location and industry- all notice types

- **Location and industry**

Provide either the postcode or region within which the works, services or products detailed in this notice will be/are being delivered. If delivery is in an international location, you should select ‘National’ from the drop down box, and include a clear note in your title and/or description to describe the actual delivery location.

- **CPV codes**

Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) codes are 8-digit numbers that are widely used to clearly identify specific business areas. CPV codes are set up as a hierarchy, with the lower level codes offering the most precise descriptions.

You must choose at least one CPV code, although you can select as many codes as you need to accurately define the works, service or products in your notice (noting that selecting a higher level CPV code will automatically select the lower level codes that sit underneath it).

Click on the ‘+’ to expand the categories. You can also use ‘CPV code or keyword search’. When you start typing a keyword or CPV code, suggested categories will appear for you to select from.

4. Description

Provide a concise overview of the buying organisation's requirements. Include anything that will be useful to suppliers viewing the notice, such as a description of the goods or services required and what will be involved in supplying the contract.

Up to 3,000 characters are available, with the first 300 characters used as a description summary in the search summary pages.

5. Contact details

Please provide the contact details for any enquiries about the notice you are adding. The email, address and name of the contact are mandatory fields that must be completed. Note that Contracts Finder does not support non-UK postcodes; please use the most relevant UK postcode.

6. Attachments

This section allows you to add extra information about your notice that will help suppliers understand your requirements. Ensure that any website links you use work properly (i.e. take users to the correct site and open a valid web page).

- [Attachments](#)

Use 'Add' to attach documents to your notice, or 'Delete' to remove documents. Provide a brief description (maximum 255 characters) so that users will know what the attachment is. You can attach several documents but each one must be no larger than 5MB in size. You should select the appropriate "document type" from the drop down list for each attachment you upload.

- [Links](#)

Use 'Add' to provide links to useful documents or websites that are relevant to your notice, or 'Delete' to remove links.

- [Additional text](#)

Use additional text (maximum 3,000 characters) to provide more detail about your notice.

7. Award information (awarded opportunities)

Award information can be added to an opportunity that has closed. You can also create a new awarded opportunity for contracts that have not previously been advertised on Contracts Finder.

- [Date contract was awarded](#)

Enter the date on which the contract was awarded.

- [Contract value \(£\)](#)

Enter the actual awarded value of the contract.

- [Contract start date](#)

Enter the date on which the contract starts.

- [Contract end date](#)

Enter the date on which the contract ends.

- [Contract procedure type](#)

Select the procedure type that was used to award the contract.

- [Table of Suppliers](#)

The table gives you the ability to add multiple suppliers listing them out as Supplier 1,2,3 etc.

- [Supplier name](#)

Provide the full name of the organisation that is awarded the contract.

- [Supplier address](#)

Enter the full postal address of the organisation that is awarded the contract.

- [Contact](#)

Provide the name of an individual within the organisation that is awarded the contract as a contact point for interested parties.

- [DUNS number \(optional\)](#)

Enter the DUNS number (if known) for the supplier chosen to deliver this contract. A DUNS number is a unique 9-digit reference used as a universal standard for identifying businesses worldwide (see www.dnb.co.uk/dandb-duns-number for more information).

8. Review and publish

All the information you have provided is included here. You should check the content and make any changes to correct errors or add additional information using the 'Edit' function. When you are satisfied that the information is complete and correct, click on 'Publish' then '**Confirm publication**' to complete the upload.

Annex 3

Contractor to Public Sector pro-forma

In order to register a supplier as buyer account on Contracts Finder you need to be sponsored by either CCS or another public sector body. Please complete and send the following email to your sponsoring department.

Subject header: Contractor to Public Sector - Registration

Body text for email:

We are in the process of registering for a “Contractor to Public Sector” account on Contracts Finder.

As our sponsoring department please forward the attached email to:
ContractsFinder@crowcommercial.gov.uk to confirm your authorisation of this request.

The following supplier has requested to register a “supplier as buyer” account on Contracts Finder.

<i>Supplier's name</i>	: XXXXXX
<i>Supplier's contact name</i>	: XXXXXX
<i>Supplier's contact email</i>	: XXXXXX
<i>Supplier's contact tel number</i>	: XXXXXX

This is to confirm that the application by XXXXX to register as a “Contractor to the Public Sector” to advertise subcontracting opportunities in line with Government Policy and/or contractual conditions.

Note, if you do not have a sponsoring department, no problem, simply send the proforma to ContractsFinder@crowcommercial.gov.uk. When emailing, please provide a short explanation for why you are applying to post supply chain notices, citing one or more public sector clients as references.

Annex 4 FAQs

1. Is a DUNS number required for registration?

No, a DUNS number is no longer required for registration, but there is an option to look up your company details when registering by entering either your organisation name, postcode or DUNS number.

2. We already have localised procurement procedures in place where we let a lot of sub-contracts to SMEs and we are worried about the impact of introducing Contracts Finder to these teams who are already working well?

We would like to encourage suppliers to make use of Contracts Finder on a voluntary basis as all stages of their engagement with their supply chain, from e.g. refreshing a supplier list in a particular region to seeking new innovations, to entering new markets or when forming a supply chain to support a bid.

Suppliers could still invite their own SMEs to apply for the opportunities that they advertise, it doesn't need to be limited only to those who approach them on the back of the advertisement on Contracts Finder.

3. Can we see some examples of requirements uploaded to Contracts Finder by other suppliers, both for Government supply chain opportunities and private sector opportunities?

Servest published one for their supplier innovation day [here](#). A full list of notices can be found by doing a search and ticking "supply chain" and unticking "public sector notices"

4. Is there a minimum timescale between advertising an opportunity and launching a tender?

No there isn't but Suppliers should allow a reasonable period of time, depending on the size and complexity of the procurement. Two weeks minimum is recommended. You must enter a closing date when advertising your opportunity.

5. When should suppliers upload their award decision? Are supply chain opportunities subject to public sector 'standstill periods' and other governance?

Award information should be added to the closed opportunity notice as soon as possible after the award and at the latest within 90 days of the award. Supply chain notices are not subject to public procurement rules and standstill periods do not apply.

6. What would happen if a bidder were unhappy with the award decision? Do they have any right to appeal, as they would do if they challenged a public sector award decision?

The public procurement rules do not apply to supply chain notices and we have included some standardised wording to that effect that is included on all supply chain notices, see below:

Private procurement rules

Supply chain notices are business-to-business transactions and are not bound by the same rules and restrictions as public sector contracts. The UK government is not responsible for the conduct of such procurement.

7. Would there be any grounds for appeal if (for example) a Supplier used the wrong CPV code or changed their minds about quantities of goods needed, therefore disadvantaging potential bidders?

There would be no grounds for appeal under the Public Contracts Regulations regarding the conduct of the procurement. CCS are not aware of any national legislation that would provide grounds for appeal in the above scenario (but CCS can't give an absolute guarantee of this and if suppliers are concerned we recommend that they seek their own legal advice).

8. Do foreign companies use Contracts Finder to advertise opportunities and if so do you have any examples?

Foreign companies are welcome to advertise on Contracts Finder but need to be aware that the majority of our suppliers who would be interested in bidding for such opportunities are UK based. Therefore companies might want to consider using Contracts Finder to advertise if the procurement is likely to be of interest to UK businesses.

9. Can we advertise private sector opportunities?

CCS recognises that some suppliers take a holistic approach to supply chains and that they may look to use the same suppliers to service both their public and private sector contracts. As such, when you are seeking suppliers to work with you in this way we are happy for these opportunities to be published on Contracts Finder.

Contact us

If you have any questions or queries relating to Contract Finder please contact our helpdesk:

E: ContractsFinder@crownccommercial.gov.uk

On site feedback link

W: www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Search

@govmysteryshop

@gov_procurement

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