

WORKING WITH THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Government procurement

SUPPLIER DEBRIEFS

Any supplier that submits an offer (also known as a proposal, quote, bid or response) for government business is entitled to a supplier debrief session from the government agency responsible for that procurement activity.

Supplier debriefs are an opportunity to:

- understand how your offer was received and evaluated
- ask questions about the strengths and weaknesses of your offer
- ask questions about the evaluation process
- learn how to strengthen future offers
- build connections and relationships with the responsible agency.

BENEFITS OF A DEBRIEF

Debriefs benefit both successful and unsuccessful suppliers as they provide an opportunity to gain insight into the government's procurement processes and improve your next offer, increasing your prospect of winning more government business.

Debriefs are also an opportunity for suppliers to give agencies feedback and ideas about how they could make it easier for suppliers to do business with government.

WHEN AND HOW TO REQUEST A DEBRIEF

Agencies must notify suppliers of the outcome of their offers, in writing, and must offer all suppliers (successful and unsuccessful) the opportunity to receive feedback on their offers. It is then up to suppliers to request a debrief from the identified contact person and agree on a time and location for the session.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT A DEBRIEF

Who usually conducts the debrief?

Debriefs may be provided in person, on the phone or online.

The debrief is usually conducted by at least 2 government representatives that were members of the evaluation team. A probity advisor and any technical expert(s) may also participate to assist with questions related to their area(s) of expertise.

What can be discussed

The identity of the successful supplier cannot be divulged at any supplier debrief, however, most contracts for goods, services or construction valued above \$500,000 must be published on the SA Tenders and Contracts website.

The agency should come to the debrief prepared to provide:

- a detailed explanation of the selection process
- a general indication of whether your was considered competitive or uncompetitive with a focus on 'value for money' rather than price
- feedback about the quality of your offer such as areas of non-compliance, how requirements were met, relative advantages of the successful offer and overall presentation of the offer
- areas of improvement and what the supplier could do to improve future responses.

What cannot be discussed

The agency cannot provide:

- actual scoring results against evaluation criteria
- specifics regarding other supplier's offers or direct comparisons with other offers
- information that may compromise confidentiality or the commercial interests of any stakeholder, which is not already publicly available.

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF A DEBRIEF

Request a debrief after every offer submission. Whether you were successful or unsuccessful, every debrief is a valuable opportunity to gain insights to strengthen future offers, and to provide feedback to the responsible agency on your experience of the process.

- Attend with an open-mind and a focus on continuous improvement.
- Take notes and use the feedback provided to improve your next offer.
- Come prepared to ask meaningful questions about the evaluation process, the strengths of your offer and areas of improvement. For example:
 - Was my offer compliant with all mandatory requirements?
 - How well did my offer meet the specified requirements?
 - Were there areas that raised concern or required clarification?
 - Was my offer easy to read and understand with important information easy to find?
 - Were the people I nominated as contacts for my offer appropriate and adequate to the task?
 - Were examples provided in my offer relevant and useful, and did I provide sufficient and appropriate evidence?
 - Were the referees I provided suitable?
 - Are there any upcoming opportunities I should be aware of?

CAN I COMPLAIN IF I DIDN'T WIN A CONTRACT?

The fact that your offer was not selected is not sufficient grounds for complaint, but you can report any concerns you may have about the procurement process that led to the outcome. Every agency is required to have a process it follows to assess a complaint, including how to escalate a complaint if necessary - you will find this information on an agency's website.

Allegations about corrupt behaviour, misconduct and maladministration must be reported to the Office for Public Integrity.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Learn more about the rules and practices of SA Government procurement and contracting by visiting www.buying4.sa.gov.au