

NPS

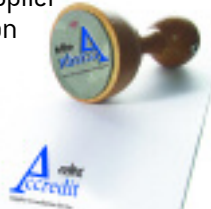


BiP's NEWSLETTER FOR THE PROCUREMENT SERVICE

ISSUE 52 AUG/SEPT 2007

Select Accredited

Simplifying Supplier
Pre-Qualification



Visit: www.bipselect.com

Call: 0845 270 7094

MoD & Supply2.gov.uk become interoperability partners

supply2.gov.uk
supplier route to government



AS PART OF the Ministry of Defence (MoD)'s ongoing drive to engage with small businesses, and following on from its recent decision to lower the thresholds at which its contract opportunities are advertised, the MoD has now teamed up with the national lower-value contracts portal service **Supply2.gov.uk** to show its support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) throughout the UK.

As the service provider for both the MoD's **Defence Contracts Bulletin** service and **Supply2.gov.uk**, BiP Solutions is delighted to see the organisations connect for the benefit of small businesses across the UK. With £15 billion spending power, across a vast array of military and non-military requirements, the MoD is an extremely active buyer and will now be able to target smaller firms often overlooked in a market dominated by large suppliers.

Interoperating with **Supply2.gov.uk** provides an ideal opportunity for public authorities and other government-backed services to show their support for small businesses.

Various levels of interoperability are available, starting with reciprocal links being established between an organisation's site and **Supply2.gov.uk**.

Since its launch in June 2006, **Supply2.gov.uk** has entered into interoperability partnerships with a number of government departments and procurement initiatives, including **Constructionline** – the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform's national register of pre-qualified construction and construction-related contractors.

For more information and to express an interest in joining the **Supply2.gov.uk** interoperability programme, email interoperability@supply2.gov.uk providing full contact details, along with an overview of the government service that is being proposed as an interoperability partner.

BiP makes the final in 'business Oscars'

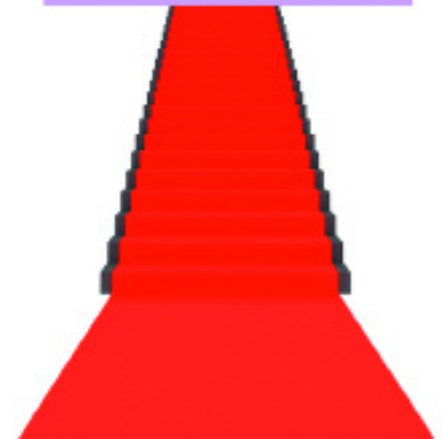
BiP SOLUTIONS is celebrating after reaching the final of this year's prestigious National Business Awards for Scotland – the company's second appearance in the Small to Medium-Sized Business of the Year category.

The Awards, branded 'the business Oscars' by Prime Minister Gordon Brown, recognise and reward excellence, innovation and success in business within the wider context of the Scottish economy. They are due to take place in Glasgow on 13 September.

BiP's nomination reflects its expertise and experience on behalf of a range of high-profile clients, including the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (as supplier of the national lower-value contracts portal www.supply2.gov.uk), the Ministry of Defence and the Home Office, as well as a number of Scottish public sector organisations.

Grahame Steed, Media Director at BiP Solutions, said: "BiP Solutions is delighted to have been announced as a finalist in the Small to Medium-Sized Business of the Year category. We are pleased that the judges have recognised the success of a Glasgow-based media company on a national and international stage, and in a market sector where innovation and service delivery are paramount."

Neil Laidler, Interim Vice President Business Services at Orange UK, said: "I am constantly impressed by the quantity and quality of the entries for the National Business Awards for Scotland. The entrants demonstrate enthusiasm and



motivation to succeed and I challenge anyone who doesn't believe Scottish businesses are at the vanguard of innovation and growth to meet with these finalists. All the finalists of the Awards have shown passion, determination and originality – we wish them all luck in the final rounds of judging."

Public procurement forms out of date

FOLLOWING A decision by the European Commission (EC) to switch to electronic copy, contracting authorities will now have to submit all forms online.

The old publication forms are being phased out by the Commission in an attempt to streamline the procurement process. By switching to electronic forms, buyers can issue notices more quickly and easily.

BiP's **Project** e-notification service will make this transition even easier for buyers. Authorities unfamiliar with the now mandatory electronic system can bring themselves up-to-date by using **Project**, which allows contracting parties to create, manage and transmit contract details quickly and efficiently.

Over 2000 UK public procurement professionals already use the service – which submits notices to the OJEU and validates them against EU Procurement Directives – ensuring they are complying with national and EC regulations as well as best practice guidance.

And it is now even easier to sign up to **Project**, which is part of BiP's wider **Delta-ets** portfolio of services, as BiP is currently offering a free **Project** licence to buyers not already using the system, and a free additional licence to existing users.

To find out more about this offer, contact the Public Sector Solutions Team on **0845 270 7090**, visit: www.bipsolutions.com/Delta/project.html, or email: psst@bipsolutions.com

Walsall Housing Group selects savings



WALSALL HOUSING Group (whg) has joined scores of public sector buyers in the UK to sign up to BiP Solutions' new national pre-qualification accreditation service, **Select Accredit**.

Owning and managing over 20,000 properties throughout Walsall, whg is a group of non-profit-making housing trusts, providing affordable, good-quality homes and housing services to the local community. By adopting Select Accredit, whg has moved even further forward in addressing the efficiency agenda and passing on savings to its clients.

Since its launch in November 2006, Select Accredit has helped organisations such as whg benefit from the service's full compliance with the EC Treaty, EU Public Procurement Directives and UK Regulations.

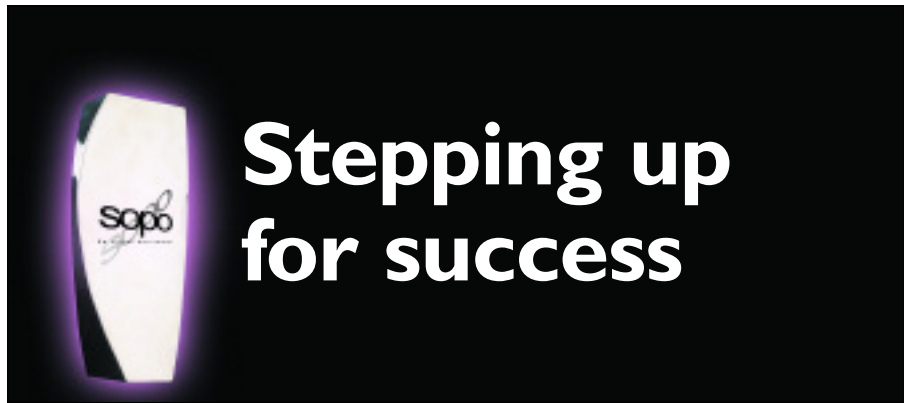
Select Accredit provides a global approach to pre-qualification via supplier assessment across a common range of requirements and delivers better value for money for both buyers and suppliers. The service helps organisations working in the public sector to deliver improvements in efficiency and streamline their procurement process, supporting a 'do it once' ethos by minimising the financial and administrative burden on buyers and suppliers by removing duplication of effort.

Select Accredit is the only cross-public sector accreditation service delivered to the same exacting standards set for the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (DBERR)'s Constructionline accreditation service – the only government-supported accreditation service in the UK.

BiP has appointed Capita – which administers the Constructionline service on behalf of the DBERR – as the vetting process service provider for Select Accredit. Capita's specialist software enables Constructionline and Select Accredit supplier information to be hosted in a shared environment, thereby reducing duplication.

Select Accredit is also endorsed by the Society of Procurement Officers in Local Government, the leading procurement organisation for local government buyers, with over 2600 members throughout the UK.

Buyers and suppliers interested in Select Accredit can find out more at: www.bipselect.com, or by calling **0845 270 7094**



Stepping up for success

THE SOCIETY of Procurement Officers (SOPO) Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Procurement 2007 are officially open and SOPO invites you to submit your entry today!

Public procurement operates within a challenging environment, primarily as a result of the increasing pressure to deliver not only value for money, but also customer satisfaction and environmentally sound solutions – and all this while ensuring that procurement exercises are conducted compliantly and inclusively. Against that background, the SOPO Awards have real meaning and value.

The Awards, introduced in 2002, are not just about reward and recognition, but also set a benchmark and promote higher standards.

Submissions can be made under four categories:

- County Council
- Unitary Authority
- District Council
- Other Public Sector Bodies

(eg police authorities, fire brigades and local government consortia)

Additionally, all submissions received with education content under the four awards categories above will be separately evaluated in conjunction with the Department for Children, Schools and Families' Centre for Procurement Performance. The Outstanding Achievement in Education Procurement Award will be presented to the submission which reflects the most significant contribution to procurement within the education sector. This special additional category not only increases your chances of winning an award; you could end up with two!

The awards will be presented at the SOPO Annual Conference, organised by BiP Solutions.

For more information visit:

<http://www.bipsolutions.com/docstore/pdf/sopoaward2007.pdf>

Deadline for submissions:

17 August 2007.

Back to school in Kenya for BiP consultants



THE INTERNATIONAL dimension to the public procurement solutions and services

delivered by the BiP Solutions consultancy team

continues to grow.

Following on from

successful projects across the EU and in the Middle East in the last 12 months, the BiP team commenced a new government project in Kenya in May.

This project will see the team and a local business consultancy deliver a procurement audit on behalf of the Kenyan Ministry of Education, based in Nairobi. The Ministry has received \$80 million in donor funding from the World Bank and the audit is being carried out to examine the procurement processes used over the last 18 months with regard to donor spend. The scheme will also propose improvements based on EU and

international best practice in public procurement, which may be introduced in Kenya.

Phase one of the project was conducted in May and June and focused on preparing an inception report for the Ministry of Education, which examined two key areas – audit capability and field work. Firstly, the instruments and documentation to be used in the audit and supporting processes will be thoroughly examined to ensure a robust and controlled approach. Secondly, the inception report included an outline of the plan for completing the field work in July and August, and all of the deliverables that this phase of the project will provide. This programme will require visits to schools and education departments in a number of locations across Kenya.

BiP consultants visited Kenya in mid-July to commence the field work. This phase will be followed up in September by the creation and presentation of the final report, which will contain the audit findings and any recommendations for improvement in the procurement processes used by the Ministry of Education.

Those in the know read GO

PROCUREMENT PROFESSIONALS are urged to get their hands on a copy of *Government Opportunities (GO)* magazine, published by BiP Solutions, to keep up to date with all the essential sector news.

The magazine, along with its official website, is the ideal means of discovering what's new, of interest and on the agenda for the procurement sector with its mix of features, interviews, news, reviews and analysis. The theme for August's edition is 'Public Sector Property Management'.

GO is essential reading for anyone involved in public procurement, so registering to ensure

you receive it regularly makes a great deal of sense.

GO is free to public sector procurement staff. Those not already receiving the monthly magazine are advised to request a copy via the website which can be found at: www.govopps.co.uk. While there, visitors can browse useful online resources such as reports, legislation and surveys on issues affecting both buyers and suppliers.

Visitors to the site are also encouraged to get interactive with a monthly poll collating data from the readership. August's burning

question is: "Do you believe that public sector bodies should restrict a percentage of their contracts to SMEs only in order to stimulate companies' growth?"

Log on now at:

www.govopps.co.uk/magazine/go-poll/ to make your vote count and view the results of last month's survey.



Scottish Executive Procurement Directorate: National Conference and Exhibition 2007



THE SCOTTISH Executive Procurement Directorate has announced that it will be holding a third National Public Procurement Conference and Exhibition. Following the success of the 2006 event, organised by BiP Solutions, this year's conference will take place at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre (SECC), Glasgow, on Wednesday 31 October.

The conference will provide a forum for those with an interest in public procurement

to hear about and discuss current issues. Delegates will also be provided with the opportunity to network with colleagues from across Scotland and to meet together in relaxed surroundings.

Full information will be announced shortly, but in the meantime, to ensure that you do not miss out on details as they are announced, please register your interest via the event website: www.scottishppc.co.uk

EU Directive offers tenderers more protection

THE EUROPEAN Council is set to modify the contract 'standstill' period, first adopted in the landmark Alcatel case, offering bidders yet more protection against illegitimate contracts.

Existing legislation decrees that contracting authorities must suspend the process for ten days – giving bidders a chance to suspend or annul the contract in the interim period between its award and conclusion.

Under the new amendments, which must now be considered by the Council before passing into law, the duration of this cooling-off period will vary according to the means by which a contracting authority notifies tenderers that the contract has been awarded.

MEPs voted to retain the ten-day requirement for those using either fax or electronic means but want to see a change in how the legislation applies to other situations. According to the MEP-driven amendment, if sending notification via other methods such as post, authorities would be bound to wait an extended 15-day period.

The legislation is expected to be approved by the Council. If approval is granted Member States will then have 24 months to transpose the Directive into national law.

To find out how BiP's **Procurement Advice and Support Service (PASS)** can help your authority with procurement focused training and consultancy, contact them on **0845 270 7090** or email: psst@bipsolutions.com

Updated TED country list

THE ISO CODE for the United Kingdom has changed following updates to the Tenders Electronic Daily (TED) country list. Country codes in the TED search masks were updated on 1 June, replacing the existing code GB with the code UK – already seen in tender notice titles.

All notices from the United Kingdom will now be registered under the new code, even if previously registered under GB. Notices previously registered under the old code will still be valid. Notices contained in the archives under GB are now searchable using the code UK.

The code CS, used for Serbia and Montenegro, will also be altered. Those using the system should now enter RS for Serbia and ME for Montenegro, only using CS when searching for previous notices under that code.

BiP's **Project** e-notice OJEU Proforma service automatically takes into account any relevant changes to the OJEU requirements – easing the burden of compliance for tenderers.

To find out more, contact the Public Sector Solutions Team on **0845 270 7090**, visit www.bipsolutions.com/Delta/project.html or email: psst@bipsolutions.com

EU procurement infringements

THE EUROPEAN Commission has begun a series of proceedings against Member States which have fallen foul



of EU laws concerning public procurement. With several countries failing to implement procedures that fully harmonise national law with the EU Directives, the Commission has discovered numerous breaches of both the transparency requirement and the need for competitive tendering.

The cases, which in some instances have been referred to the European Court of Justice, shed light on the definition of a 'public contract' – limiting the scope of the term in order to prevent Member States from avoiding the associated legislation.

Full details of the infringements are covered in August's edition of *Government Opportunities (GO)* magazine.

NPS EVENTS GUIDE

Conferences, exhibitions and seminars aimed at procurement professionals.

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER

Supplier Negotiation: Developing your Understanding

11 Sep – Birmingham 16 Oct – London

Introducing Effective Supply Chain Management

11 Sep – Birmingham 9 Nov – Birmingham
16 Oct – London

Select Accredited Roadshow 2007

11 Sep – Glasgow 17 Oct – Cambridge
19 Sep – London 18 Oct – Milton Keynes
20 Sep – Durham 21 Nov – Bristol
2 Oct – Leeds 22 Nov – Cardiff
3 Oct – Manchester

How to Win Tenders

11 Sep – London 4 Dec – London
14 Nov – Manchester

Perfecting Compliant Evaluation Processes

12 Sep – London 15 Nov – London

Preparing Perfect Tenders

12 Sep – Birmingham 29 Nov – London
22 Nov – Glasgow

Delivering Sustainable Public Procurement

13 Sep – Birmingham 9 Oct – Manchester
20 Sep – London

Connecting Government – SOPO One Day Conference

18 Sep – Victoria Park Plaza, London

Understanding the OJEU Proforma Requirements

18 Sep – London 20 Nov – London
10 Oct – Manchester

Scottish Executive Procurement for Managers Roadshow

11 Oct – Glenrothes 6 Nov – Perth
16 Oct – Inverness 13 Nov – Edinburgh
17 Oct – Stirling 21 Nov – Glasgow

Developing your Tendering Knowledge

25 Sep – Heathrow 14 Nov – London

Effective Legal Compliance in Public Procurement

26 Sep – Heathrow 28 Nov – London
13 Nov – Manchester

How to Develop a Gateway Process

27 Sep – Heathrow 13 Nov – London

Understanding the Selection Process

2 Oct – London 28 Nov – Birmingham

Understanding EU Procurement – A Scottish Perspective

3 Oct – Inverness 18 Oct – Edinburgh
4 Oct – Glasgow 7 Nov – Aberdeen

How to Engage with the Third Sector

3 Oct – London 29 Nov – Birmingham

When the EU Directive Meets the UK Regulations

4 Oct – London 27 Nov – London

McClelland and Beyond – The Supplier Route Forward

9 Oct – Edinburgh 15 Nov – Glasgow
8 Nov – Aberdeen

Constructing the Future

9 Oct – Cavendish Conference Centre, London

Selling to NHS

10 Oct – Renaissance, Heathrow

An Introduction to New Purchasing Techniques

10 Oct – Manchester 20 Nov – London

Freedom of Information – Contracts and your Business

10 Oct – Manchester 27 Nov – Birmingham

Working with the Centres of Excellence

10 Oct – Manchester 27 Nov – Birmingham

Enabling the Future – Defence Procurement Conference and Exhibition

17 Oct – City Centre Marriott, Bristol

Applying Best Practice Contract and Performance Management

17 Oct – London 15 Nov – Manchester

Scottish Executive Public Procurement Conference

31 Oct – SECC, Glasgow

Health Care Supply Association Conference and Exhibition

1-2 Nov – Holiday Inn, Stratford-Upon-Avon

SOPO Annual Conference and Exhibition

7-8 Nov – Novotel West, London

A Beginner's Guide to EU Regulations

21 Nov – London

Scotland Excel Conference and Exhibition

28 Nov – Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh

For further information on advertising your event in this newsletter, contact our **Events Team** at BiP on **0845 270 7095** email events@bipsolutions.com or visit www.bipsolutions.com/events

Student Loans Company goes unlimited

THE STUDENT LOANS Company has signed up to BiP Solution's **Delta Unlimited** package – allowing them access to the full range of BiP e-tendering tools, vital to procurement professionals.

With unlimited access to BiP's Delta e-tendering suite, all Student Loans Company procurement personnel can now make full use of the **Select, Project and Vault** systems as well as the accreditation service, Select Accredited and the eAuction service. In addition, BiP is setting up a Student Loans Company **aXcess** buyer profile which allows suppliers to view important contract information and also potential contract opportunities online.

The Delta e-tendering suite is designed to maximise savings and efficiency for both buyers and suppliers by giving them access to BiP's

e-notification service, supplier information database, secure document exchange and e-auctions facilities.

To learn more about Delta, contact the Public Sector Solutions team on: **0845 270 7090** or email: psst@bipsolutions.com

Top Tip

UNDERSTANDING YOUR spend is vital to securing savings. If your supplier data is out of date then gaining intelligence on supplier spend within your authority will be all but impossible.

BiP Solutions finds that on average public sector supplier lists contain less than 50% usable data. In other words, the data is too poor to identify suppliers' contact details and, more likely than not, little is known about the contracts that suppliers hold with the authority.

By moving your supplier lists onto an online platform, through services such as BiP's **Select** supplier pre-qualification service, you let suppliers take responsibility for managing their own data, thereby not only reducing to a minimum the resources you need to manage your lists but also ensuring that your suppliers' data is always current and accurate. Select then allows you to build as many specific category lists as you wish and to note contract awards against suppliers when required.

Using Select costs nothing to a public authority. You could make even more process time savings by leaving the vetting of suppliers to Select through its Accredited service, to which over 60 authorities have already signed up.

Visit Select at: www.bipselect.com



IN SEPTEMBER'S



Government Opportunities

- **GO Interview** – Mark Pedlingham, Director of Strategic Supplier Relations at the OGC and Head of the Government Procurement Service
- **DEMOS** discuss how we can push the boundaries on the debate of public service innovation and public sector reform
- **Michael Hardware** explains collaborative working for construction/PFI

NPS CONTACTS

Publisher



BiP Solutions Ltd

Park House, 300 Glasgow Road
Shawfield, Glasgow G73 1SQ

Tel: 0141 332 8247

Fax: 0141 331 2652/2792

Email: bip@bipsolutions.com

Website: www.bipsolutions.com

Editorial

media@bipsolutions.com

Marketing

marketing@bipsolutions.com

Customer Support

support@bipsolutions.com