



Procurement Policy

1. Overview

This policy has been produced for potential suppliers to help understand how Women in the Fire Service UK (WFS) are working towards the integration of equality and inclusion in procurement.

We aim to give information on how we will promote equality in the procurement of goods, works and services and our expectations from suppliers during the procurement process, in line with best practice and the Equality Act 2010.

2. Equality and Inclusion in Procurement

As a procurer of goods and services we are committed to:

- (i) Ensuring the suppliers from whom we procure goods and services are aligned with our equality and inclusion values.
- (ii) Actively considering supplier diversity as a key aspect in our contract management.

3. The Role of Procurement

Each year WFS enters into contracts for buying goods and services on behalf of its members. These goods and services provided to the community must be geared towards their diverse needs and requirements.

Spending by us, however small helps sustain and maintain SME's and whilst we don't have a statutory duty to ensure that public money is spent in a way that ensures value for money and does not lead to unfair discrimination and/or social exclusion, as an organisation dedicated to equality and diversity, it is important we aspire to the right principles.

The promotion of equality and inclusion in procurement will help to:

- (i) Improve the overall value for money in terms of the goods and services it purchases.
- (ii) Improve the quality, responsiveness and appropriateness of our services.
- (iii) Ensure that money from the public purse is not spent on practices which lead to unfair discrimination.

Using appropriate procurement procedures given the size and scale of WFS, we will aim to ensure not only that our suppliers are appointed fairly but also that there is equality and inclusivity in the provision of our services and that

our suppliers in turn also operate equality in employment policies.

Equality and inclusion issues will be addressed through the procurement process in a proportionate way and where they are relevant to the subject matter of the contract or where they relate to the performance of the contract in question.

Equality and inclusion where relevant will be integral within each stage of the procurement process:

- (ii) Drawing up the contract specification
- (iii) Setting the contract conditions
- (iv) Selecting tenders
- (v) Inviting tender bids
- (vi) Evaluating and awarding the contract
- (vii) Monitoring and managing of the contract

Where there is 5-year cumulative value, WFS undertakes to review the contract and advise the NEC. The NEC can then decide whether it is in the interests of the organisation to go to quote or tender.

4. Legal Background

Under the Equality Act 2010 all public bodies must show how they have considered the general and specific duties when procuring goods and services. Whilst this legislation does not apply to WFS, our major source of funding is from public funds, and as such we will try to act in accordance with the spirit and principles.

WFS expects its Suppliers and Contractors to comply with all relevant legislation and incorporates this as a requirement in all its contracts.

5. Supplier Diversity

WFS is committed to fostering a supplier base that is diverse and inclusive and aims to ensure that businesses of diverse backgrounds and ownership have the opportunity to become valued suppliers of WFS. We will strive to ensure that:

- (i) All of our procurement practices support our Equality and Diversity Policy and enable us to meet our duties under quality anti-discrimination legislation.
- (ii) All contracts we award are non-discriminatory and promote equality.
- (iii) The suppliers we work with are non-discriminatory and share our commitment to promoting equality and diversity supporting inclusion.
- (iv) Include an equality clause in standard documentation on all major

contracts for services and works.

(v) Include an equality clause in the terms and conditions used for goods and related contracts.

(vi) Ask questions in all pre-tender questionnaires which enable us to assess the arrangements of potential contractors for ensuring they comply with the Equality Act 2010.

(vii) Include specific equality requirements in our evaluation criteria and contracts, where relevant.

6. Contract Monitoring

Following the award of a contract we will monitor the performance under the contract against the protected characteristic groups, in line with the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics. We will make sure the supplier continues to meet our requirements including our equality and inclusion requirements. We will monitor this by way of:

(i) Sending the supplier a questionnaire (Annex 1) to complete and return to us, and/or

(ii) Arranging site visits to see how the suppliers are meeting our requirements in practice, and/or

(iii) Asking the supplier to provide information that demonstrates compliance with any specific equality and inclusion clause in their contract with us, including training provided to its employees and/or service user information across protected characteristic groups.

(iv) Asking the supplier to give us equality monitoring information about their workforce across protected characteristic groups, for example the number of employees who are women or from black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

ANNEX 1 - Questionnaire

Equalities and Inclusion Questionnaire

Section A – Compulsory Questions

To be completed by all those contractors invited to Quote or Tender. Section A of this questionnaire must be completed satisfactorily in order for any company to be considered for any quotation or tender for any WFS contract.

1. Do you have policies in place to ensure that you as an employer and as a service provider comply with your statutory obligations under the equality legislation, which applies to Great Britain, or equivalent legislation in the countries in which you employ staff?

Yes /No

2. Do you have a written equality policy covering all protected characteristics?

Yes / No

3. Does your written equality policy cover recruitment, selection, training, promotion, discipline and dismissal?

Yes / No

4. Does your written equality policy cover victimisation, discrimination and harassment making it clear that these are disciplinary offences?

Yes / No

5. Does your written equality policy cover the identity of the senior position of responsibility for the policy and its effective implementation?

Yes / No

6. Is your policy on equality set out in documents available and communicated to employees, managers, recognised trade unions or other representative groups, including in alternative formats, where requested?

Yes / No

7. Is your policy on equality set out in recruitment advertisements or other literature?

Yes / No

8. Is your policy on equality set out in materials promoting your services?

Yes / No

If you answered NO to any part of questions 3 or 4 please provide or list evidence to show how you promote equality in employment and service delivery.

If you answered YES to any part of questions 3 or 4, detail or list evidence that can support your answers below.

If you are not currently subject to UK employment law, please supply details of how you or your firm comply with equivalent legislation that is designed to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity.

Section B – Additional Equalities Questions

To be completed when equality and inclusion is considered a core requirement:

9. Are members of your staff with managerial responsibilities required to receive equalities training?

Yes / No

If you have answered YES to question 9, please provide a list of such training (continue on an additional sheet if required).

10. Do you issue your written equality policy to managers and supervisors concerned with recruitment, selection, remuneration, training and promotion?

Yes / No

11. Do you have procedures in place to protect members of your staff from unlawful discrimination by other members of staff or by members of the public?

Yes / No

If you have answered YES, please list the procedures below (continue on an additional sheet if required).

12. In the last three years, have any findings of unlawful discrimination been made against you or your firm by the Employment Tribunal, the Employment Appeal Tribunal or any other court or in comparable proceedings in any other jurisdiction?

Yes / No

13. In the last three years, has any contract with you or your firm been terminated on grounds of your failure to comply with:

Legislation prohibiting discrimination?

Yes / No

Contract conditions relating to equality?

Yes / No

If the answer to question 13 or 14 is YES, please provide details below and specify what steps you or your firm have taken as a result (continue on an additional sheet if required).

14. In the last three years, have you or your firm been the subject of formal investigations by the Equality and Human Rights Commission or its predecessors (the Commission for Racial Equality, the Disability Rights Commission, the Equal Opportunities Commission) or a comparable body, on grounds of alleged unlawful discrimination?

Yes / No

15. If the answer to question 15 is YES, please provide details below and specify what steps you or your firm have taken as a result (continue on an additional sheet if required).