

# VCSE Skills and Information Workshops – Victims’ Services

## Top Tips for Tender Writing

This resource complements a series of Skills and Information workshops that Pulse Regeneration has been contracted to deliver by the Ministry of Justice to providers in the VCSE sector that deliver victims’ support services.

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# Top Tips for Tender Writing

## 1. Read the Specification Carefully

- Read the specification in detail to understand exactly what is being requested
- Undertake research and gather local intelligence where possible
- Draw on your team's specialisms when developing specific parts of the bid, such as HR, finance, or operations

## 2. Answer the Question Set

- Respond to what is being asked, not what you think you can answer
- Use a clear and logical structure when answering questions
- Make it easy for the buyer to read and pick out key points from your answer

## 3. Ask if Not Clear

- Ask the buyer if you are unsure, directly or via a portal
- Be aware that a buyer's response may give away a commercial advantage
- There is often a Q&A response process, make sure you are aware of this and can access it

## 4. Tailor Your Response

- Avoid using standard text as this is unlikely to fully meet the specification
- Consider your experience, and adapt this where necessary to align with the specification
- Understand your competitive advantage and use this to stand out from competition

## 5. Provide Evidence

- Seek to quantify key statements you make with examples of your services
- Try and select examples that closely match the specification
- Seek to reference successful previous delivery wherever possible to prove a track record

## 6. Ensure Well Written And Well Presented

- Keep your writing style clear and concise, use plain English, and check for typos
- Make it interesting to read, offer the buyer something innovative where possible
- Keep fonts standard, and if written by a team ensure the style is consistent throughout

## 7. Check your Pricing Carefully

- Ensure that you have provided detail on all required prices or areas of cost
- Double check that your totals add up, and remember to account for VAT
- Ensure any assumptions include a clear evidence base and are well explained

## 8. Don't Include Documents Not Asked For

- Check early on that you understand what information is, and is not, requested
- Providing unrequested materials will probably be ignored, and may demonstrate you cannot follow instructions if those materials have been explicitly refused
- If there is a key point in additional materials, try to write this into your response instead

## 9. Use a 'Critical Friend' to Read

- This may identify other aspects of performance or evidence you could include
- This may identify areas of your response that could be improved, for example reducing duplication or removing unnecessary jargon/ acronyms
- This may identify questions that the buyer may raise about your response

## 10. Get your Bid In On Time

- Ensure that you meet the deadline no matter what, as failure to adhere to this will disqualify your bid and all of the effort you have put in
- Double check that all information is included that has been requested, clearly mark and index documents/ appendices, and ensure any declarations are signed and dated
- Keep a copy of the final bid exactly as it has been submitted for your records