

## Tender Toolkit

### Guide #1: Tendering Essentials

*Your quick starting guide to confidently bidding for government contracts.*

#### What is a Tender?

A tender is a formal invitation to submit an offer to deliver goods or services. Tenders help ensure fair, open, and transparent selection processes.

Tendering can significantly grow your business, bringing stability, credibility, and long-term contracts. But it can feel overwhelming if you're new to it. This toolkit makes it simpler.

#### Key Terms Explained

- **Addenda:** Updates or clarifications issued by the buyer after the tender has opened. You must acknowledge receipt.
- **Clarifications/Questions:** A window to ask questions about the tender. Always use it if unsure.
- **EOI (Expression of Interest):** A prequalification step where you express capability and interest, often used to shortlist suppliers.
- **Evaluation Criteria:** The weighted areas your tender will be scored on, e.g. price, methodology, capacity, local benefit.
- **ICN (Industry Capability Network):** Free platform to register for tender alerts, connect with buyers, and showcase your capability.
- **Mandatory Criteria:** Must be met in full. If you can't demonstrate this, your tender won't be considered.
- **Non-Conforming Tender:** A response that doesn't meet all requirements. Usually not considered unless allowed.
- **Response Schedules:** Where you answer specific questions about capability, methodology, pricing, social procurement, etc.
- **Request for Proposal (RFP):** More open ended, used when the buyer wants innovative or flexible solutions.
- **Request for Quotation (RFQ):** A simpler tender usually for lower value contracts. Often requires fewer documents.
- **Request for Tender (RFT):** A formal invitation to submit a bid for a project or supply arrangement.

## Where to Find Opportunities

Tender opportunities for local and state government contracts are published on platforms like:

- [Buying for Victoria](#): This is the central place for all suppliers to register interest in supplying to Victorian Government.
- [ICN Gateway](#): Register for project notifications relevant to your business. ICN also provides free support and can review your capability statement.
- [City of Ballarat tenders](#): Register for project notifications relevant to the City of Ballarat and others registered on this platform.

There are also several affordable paid subscriptions available.

**Tip:** Register your business details and capability statement on ICN Gateway to get some automatic alerts about relevant tenders and to liaise directly with councils or government departments you intend to supply to.

## Tendering Roadmap: From Finding to Winning

### 1. Identify Opportunities

Register with ICN and other platforms. Set up alerts.

### 2. Assess Readiness (*Toolkit Item #2 & #10: Tender Readiness & Partnering to Win*)

Evaluate your capacity, compliance, and competitive positioning.

### 3. Understand Requirements (*Toolkit Item #3: Evaluation Criteria Guide*)

Understand exactly what evaluators want and how they score.

### 4. Prepare Responses & Policies (*Toolkit Items #4 & #7: Policy and Attachments*)

Prepare policies and required documentation (WHS, environmental, insurance, social procurement).

### 5. Write Clearly and Convincingly (*Toolkit Items #5, #6 & #10: Capability Statements & Social Procurement*)

Showcase your strengths clearly aligned with what evaluators value.

### 6. Finalise and Submit (*Toolkit Item #8: Review & Submit Checklist*)

Check carefully before submitting, as no mistakes or missed attachments will be accepted.

## How to Use This Toolkit

- Download the full pack or just the guides you need.
- Keep these short guides as a handy reference each time you respond to tenders.
- They're practical and actionable, not theoretical. Use them actively as you write your tender.

**Important:** *This toolkit is designed for real use during tenders, not as a course.*

### **Other Benefits of Tendering**

Tendering doesn't just mean winning contracts:

- It boosts your credibility and visibility.
- Helps you clarify and market your capabilities.
- Strengthens internal processes like safety, quality, and risk management.
- Leads to more referrals and repeat work opportunities.

### **Your Tendering Partners**

#### **Grantus**

This toolkit is authored by Simon Coutts, Director of Grantus, with over 25 years' experience helping regional Victorian businesses and councils secure over \$440 million in funding and tender opportunities.

Simon specialises in simplifying tender processes, cutting through complexity, and empowering organisations to compete confidently.

*"Simon and Grantus made a significant difference to our tendering process, offering clear advice, practical tools, and a strong submission."*

**David Herman, CEO, Sectrol Security**

Take the next step: win more, stress less and contact Grantus for your tendering support.

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#### **Industry Capability Network (ICN)**

ICN helps businesses find opportunities, prepare tenders, and showcase capabilities.

[icn.org.au](http://icn.org.au)

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