

Local businesses should promote themselves to the public sector

✘ Businesses in Edinburgh are being urged to get themselves noticed if they want to access public sector contracts up for grabs in the region.

Public Contract Scotland (PCS) – The Scottish Government’s flagship procurement portal – has launched an improved service, Supplier Finder, to help buyers find suppliers, their goods, works or services more easily. PCS advertises contracts for over 650 public sector organisations, such as councils, NHS, police, universities and colleges – a market worth £9 billion per annum.

Since the portal was launched in 2008, 7,108 businesses in Edinburgh and surrounding areas have registered on the PCS portal – 39 per cent of these have a turnover of less than £1 million and employ one to four employees – with 3,508 number of contract opportunities advertised by the region’s public sector organisations.

Supplier Finder improves the matchmaking procurement process, helping buyers quickly source relevant suppliers for low value, low risk quotations. It also helps build a picture of particular local supply markets before a buyer starts a formal tendering process.

In order to get noticed, businesses in Edinburgh are being encouraged to update their profile on the PCS portal. Businesses which have uploaded their logos, website addresses, used keywords to describe their goods and services and highlighted which regions in Scotland they would like to sell into, stand a better chance of being selected for quotations.

In addition, businesses which complete a Supplier Finder profile are more likely to be included in a Quick Quote – an online request for competitive quotes for low-value contracts where an advert is not required.

The capability to build an accurate picture of suppliers able to supply their local public sector is central to the Scottish Government's key agenda of creating an environment for sustainable local economic growth.

Gary Robinson, from The Scottish Government procurement directorate, said: "Winning contracts for any business is vital to its success, and this is particularly true during a challenging economic climate. The public sector offers Scottish businesses, of all sizes, a range of opportunities. But, if businesses in Edinburgh want to access these opportunities it's vital they sign up to PCS and promote what it is they do and where they are able to deliver their goods or services.

"Public Contracts Scotland has created a more inclusive and transparent environment for suppliers to bid for contracts. The PCS portal is a free, one-stop shop for public sector contracts – businesses can even receive email alerts when there is a relevant opportunity.

"Over 60,000 businesses are registered with PCS – I would strongly encourage all businesses wishing to win business from the Scottish public sector to do the same."

An additional development to PCS designed to help suppliers gain local contract opportunities is a regional email alert filtering system, allowing suppliers to receive alerts relevant to their locality only.

For further information visit www.publicsectorcontracts.gov.uk