



Go-2-Tender Training Scheme for SMEs - Ireland



Public Procurement Principle: **Access, Capacity, Participation, Balance**



Procurement Stage: **Pre-tendering, Tendering**



Audience: **Private sector, Procuring entity**

Description

InterTradeIreland, an agency funded by the Department of Business Enterprise and Innovation in Ireland (DBEI) and the Department for the Economy, provides a number of services to business with the goal of enhancing growth opportunities, innovation and competitiveness. It is recognised for offering services targeted specifically at SMEs that aim to help them compete in procurement markets.

Its foremost service in this regard is the Go-2-Tender training scheme, two-day practical tender workshops designed for an SME audience that covers key aspects of procurement. During the seminar SMEs are taught the knowledge and practical skills that will enable them to be successful at tendering, such as identifying opportunities, registering on procurement portals, bid/no bid decision making, and drafting of successful proposals.

To participate, companies must meet a number of eligibility criteria, such as being classified as an SME, operating in the manufacturing and tradable services sectors and demonstrating export potential. The workshops are conducted by experienced tender specialists and provide insight into the procurement practices of public sector bodies in Ireland. Guest speakers from central government/large public procurement organisations are also invited. In addition to the plenary session, half a day of the workshop is dedicated to mentoring sessions, where participants can choose their topic of interest. Workshops are offered in various locations and participation fees of EUR 100 apply. In 2016, seven seminars were held across the country and a similar number is foreseen for 2017. Participants can also apply for a follow-up workshop once they have concluded the first Go-2-Tender seminar.

Since the programme was introduced in 2007, over 900 companies have completed the workshop and were able to win procurement contracts worth EUR 69 million. In addition, InterTradeIreland organises practical half-day seminars aimed specifically at small

business owners who will be new to public sector tendering, have limited knowledge and/or experience of the market, or simply want to refresh their knowledge of the public sector. Targeting the micro sector (<10 employees), these seminars focus on low-value/under-threshold opportunities. They also arrange Meet the Buyer events, offering SMEs the opportunity of face-to-face interaction. Finally, the agency offers FAQs, guides, videos and presentations as well as dedicated events on emerging trends that impact the procurement environment for SMEs.

Source: OECD (2018), SMEs in Public Procurement: Practices and Strategies for Shared Benefits, OECD Public <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264307476-en>

