Best Practice Guide – Request for Proposal (RFP)

## About these guides

We understand that, while there can be common aspects, organisations work in different ways and what works for one might not fit so well with another. These guides are written as an example of what leading practice might look like in your organisation, but it may be that you have to adjust what is recommended to accommodate your particular circumstances.

Similarly, the guides do not include detailed technical information as this would tie them to a specific technology or set of circumstances. Instead the guides convey important principles and approaches that can be applied in any industry and using any technology. Where appropriate the guides reference other sites and resources which contain more technical detail at the time of publication/last review.

Introduction

A Request For Proposal (RFP) document outlines preliminary requirements for commodities or services, and may dictate to varying degrees the exact structure and format of the supplier's response. Effective RFPs typically reflect the strategy and short/long-term business objectives, providing detailed insight upon which suppliers will be able to offer a matching perspective. It is therefore imperative in a Disability-Smart organisation to include accessibility as part of this proposal. This document will provide you with an outline of the key criteria you may wish to include within your own RFP.

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## How much detail should I provide?

This will very much be up to you on how much information you feel is relevant to your supplier and for the kind of contract that you are commissioning. There is always more than can be added to these documents, but below is a simple approach that should work for most suppliers.

[INSERT COMPANY NAME HERE] is committed to utilising and making available accessible technologies and products that contribute to the productivity of all of our employees including those with disabilities, as well as ensuring an accessible, inclusive and barrier-free experience for all our customers including those who might have additional access requirements. [INSERT COMPANY NAME HERE] therefore requires that any technology, products and services that we procure take into account the access requirements of people with disabilities, and adopt a best practice approach to inclusion, accessibility and usability. We also require suppliers to comply with any standards, best practice guidance and regulations concerning their use, including but not limited to:

* World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Content Guidelines (WCAG) v2.1 (<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>) – minimum AA compliance
* In the UK: Equality Act 2010 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>)
* (For Public Sector Bodies in the UK) The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/852/made>)

Similar legislation may exist in other countries.

### Questions

1. What is your organisation's Accessible Technology Statement?
2. To what extent are your products and services accessible and usable to people with disabilities? What external standards have you used to qualify this and how have you tested your products and services against them (e.g. have you tested features directly with people with disabilities)?
3. If there are aspects of accessibility and usability with which your products or services fail to comply:

a) What adjustments can be made to meet the needs of those users with access requirements, and

b) What are you doing to ensure a best practice approach in future so that your approach is fully inclusive irrespective of anyone’s access requirements?

1. As you develop your products and services how will you ensure their accessibility and usability for people with disabilities (e.g. focus groups, direct user testing etc.)?
2. Provide an example of a past project where you have successfully incorporated accessibility and usability in your solution.
3. Best practices on accessibility and usability are continuously evolving: describe how you will ensure that any developments in the design of your products and services will ensure the access needs of people with disabilities are met in future?

Business Disability Forum is committed to ensuring that all its products and services are as accessible as possible to everyone. If you wish to discuss anything with regard to the accessibility of this document, please contact us.

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