

Bristol Water's Bid Assessment Framework - FAQs

The Bid Assessment Framework is often called the 'BAF'. The latest version of the BAF was published in July 2019 following a public consultation in June and July 2019.

What is the BAF?

The BAF is a structured approach to support a competitive bidding market for water resources, demand management and leakage services. It provides the basis and process for inviting and considering third party bids and comparing them against potential in-house solutions and builds on existing processes and obligations such as water resources planning requirements, procurement principles, and competition obligations, with a focus on ensuring consistency and transparency throughout the tendering process.

What does the BAF cover?

The BAF covers water resources, demand management and leakage services only.

Why has the BAF been introduced?

The requirement for a BAF was introduced to enable a competitive bidding market for water resources, demand management and leakage and to ensure this was done in a transparent and non-discriminatory way.

What about other goods, works and services which are not covered by the BAF how do I bid for those?

We regularly publish opportunities on the following portal - https://esourcing.bristolwater.co.uk/current_opportunities.cfm. Alternatively, you can email procurementteam@bristolwater.co.uk.

What about procurement law?

The principal procurement rules governing utilities in the UK are the Utilities Contract Regulations 2016 (SI 2016/274).

Who can bid under the BAF?

Anyone can submit a proposal to Bristol Water under the BAF. Template bid proposal forms are available as an appendix to the BAF.

How do I get more information or raise an issue with a process?

We see our BAF as a live document. If you are a supplier or another interested stakeholder, and have views on the content of this framework, then please contact us at water.resources@bristolwater.co.uk. We are keen to receive feedback, and where appropriate, will reflect suggestions received in further iterations of the BAF.

Do other Water Companies have a BAF?

Yes, all Water Companies should have their own BAF document regulating their approach to water resources, demand management and leakage services. These are available on Ofwat's [website](#).

What terms and conditions will apply to the provision of services to Bristol Water?

Please see Bristol Water's [Water Trading and Procurement Code](#).

If my bid is not successful will I receive feedback on my submission?

Yes, all unsuccessful bidders will receive written feedback on their submission detailing why the winning submission won and how the unsuccessful bidder can improve their submission and approach when bidding again in the future.

How do you handle confidential information that has been submitted?

All information provided to us by third parties will be treated confidentially and only used for the purposes for which it has been provided. We will not distribute or disseminate any information provided to us except where necessary for fulfilling our functions and:

- where required or permitted by law;
- where necessary to protect public health; or
- where agreed with those who have provided the data to us.

Where third parties have any concerns around provision or use of information, they should contact our competition compliance officer, whose contact details can be found in our published Compliance Code.

Can we come in and present our proposals to Bristol Water's managers and directors?

Initially, any proposal should be sent to the Procurement team for review and consideration. As above, if further Bristol Water staff need to see the submission a confidential agreement would be entered into. Following further review it may be appropriate to meet and discuss the proposal, including presenting any submission to managers and directors of Bristol Water however this would be looked at on a case by case basis as to what was appropriate for the specific submission.

On the final "procurement" step, particularly for those proposals coming through the innovation route, does this final step involve going back out to the market or is it a negotiated agreement with the supplier? Do you have any criteria by which you would screen the organisations submitting bids and will, or could, you use this procurement step to encourage positive outcomes in your supply chain, such as improved water efficiency.

It could be either option depending on the nature and the potential value of the work / project being proposed. The criteria and assessment is determined based on several factors including the requirement, risk and the procurement strategy being followed. In determining the potential value we need to ensure that we comply with all relevant legislation, in particular the Utilities Contract Regulations 2016 and that we operate in a transparent and non-discriminatory way with all suppliers.

In the event that we are negotiating directly, we would undertake as a minimum a number of assessments as to the financial and technical viability of the supplier and request them to undertake a Health & Safety assessment (depending on the risk). We would then put in place an appropriate contractual mechanism.

Where we go back out to the market, this will be in line with procurement policy and legislation. This will be transparent and we will publish the criteria and evaluation weightings that will be used as part of market engagement activity.

What is the relationship between the BAF and bilateral markets?

There are different areas of market development in relation to water resources. One area is the bidding market (including market trading) and the BAF supports the development of these markets. Another area is known as bilateral markets.

The development of bilateral markets sits within a wide-ranging regulatory landscape for water resources, which includes: the UK government's 25 Year Environment plan; the UK government's water abstraction plan; the Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) process, overseen by the EA; and the National Infrastructure Commission's (NIC) recommendation for long term investment in a national water network. Ofwat, EA and DWI are increasingly working in closer collaboration to address water resource issues.

English water companies need to be prepared to fully operate in a bilateral water resources market. The English bilateral market will open when DEFRA bring in certain provisions of the Water Act 2014. Once open, retailers in the business market would be able to procure water directly from third parties and use incumbents' network to transport it to customers. For the market to operate, incumbents will need to establish cost-reflective access prices for their network-plus services, where an equalisation payment may be applied to ensure a level playing-field for new water resources.