GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN
MINISTRY OF FINANCE
PUBLIC SECTOR PROCUREMENT PLATFORM

Electronic Tendering Services Guide: Preparation and Submission of Bids

Directorate-General of State Assets
Sub-Directorate General of Electronic Procurement Coordination

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the Electronic Tendering Services on the Public Sector Procurement Platform (hereinafter, the Platform or SPSPP) for company users (bidders and applicants).

Basically, Electronic Tendering Services allow the telematic preparation and submission of bids, their electronic safekeeping by the system and the opening and electronic evaluation of the documentation by the members of the assisting body. For this reason, it is necessary for users of the procurement platform to configure the procedure in accordance with certain rules that apply to electronic tendering.

The preparation of a bid by a bidder can come in response to the publication of an invitation to tender and the specifications or, in the case of procedures by invitation, in response to receiving a request for tender from the contracting authority/interested party.

This guide specifically documents how bidders can prepare the documentation and envelopes that make up a bid using the Bid Preparation and Submission Tool in both cases (when specifications are published and when invitations are sent out).

For bidders to use these services, it is an absolute requirement for them to be registered users of the Public Sector Procurement Platform and to fill out not only the information needed for basic registration but also the additional information (See the “Economic Operator’s Guide). In regard to the technical requirements for the use of the service, these are very simple: an Internet connection, a browser with an up-to-date version of Java (preferably v1.8 or higher) and an electronic certificate recognised by the General State Administration (GSA) validation service (@firma).

To use this guide, it is necessary to review what is specified in the “Economic Operator’s Guide”, since it gives a general overview of the creation of a tender dossier.

Nb: More information on electronic certificates recognised by the GSA can be found at the following link: http://firmaelectronica.gob.es/Home/Ciudadanos/Certificados- Electronicos.html

2. Bid Preparation and Submission Tool

2.1 Definition

The Bid Preparation and Submission Tool (hereinafter, the 'Tool') is an application that the Public Sector Procurement Platform provides to bidders so that they can send in the documentation for their bids, grouped into the virtual envelopes defined by the contracting authority (the tenderer), and to ensure the integrity, authenticity, non-repudiation and confidentiality of the proposals (for further details see below).

To give bidders greater confidence, while the offer is being prepared, the documentation and details remain on the client computer until they are submitted. At that time, and not before, all the documentation is encrypted and goes to the Platform servers, where it will be kept in safekeeping (inaccessible) until it is opened.

2.2 Requirements for the Use of the Electronic Tendering tool

2.2.1 Functional Requirements

To be registered with the Public Sector Procurement Platform as an “Economic Operator” user. The registration must include both the basic data and additional data (figure 1). For further details on how to register with the Platform, see the “Economic Operator’s Guide”.

(Figure 1: Registering as an economic operator user).

NB: Users who only register with the basic data can use the basic services offered to companies by the Platform (subscriptions, tender search, alerts) but not those related to Electronic Tendering (electronic preparation and telematic submission of bids).

NB: It is essential that economic operator users use the e-mail address for correspondence that they provided to the public body for receiving communications and invitations leading to electronic bids. If another e-mail address is used, it will not enable the Bid Preparation and Submission Tool and the user will not be able to submit bids using the Platform.

NB: The e-mail address given in the basic information should recommendably be a personal or work e-mail that identifies the user, e.g., pepeperez@empresa1.es. However, it is advisable for the correspondence e-mail address to be a generic, sales department or similar address, with an inbox that is accessed by various users, e.g., comerciales@empresa1.es.

The contracting authority will configure a tender electronically and give that configuration to applicants/bidders either by publishing specifications (for procedures WITHOUT an invitation) or by sending out an invitation/request to tender (for procedures WITH an invitation).

2.2.2 Technical Requirements.

2.2.2.1 Version 1.8 of the Java Virtual Machine installed.

In the Java Control Panel (figure 2), check the version under the “General” tab (figure 3) and press the About button (figure 4).

Figure 1: Access to the Java Control Panel

Figure 2: Java Control Panel

Figure 3: About Java. Version

High security level on the Java console. To check this setting (figure 3), click on the “Security” tab (figure 5).

(Figure 5: Java Security: Level and List of Exceptions).

Add https://contrataciondelestado.as an exception (figure 5).
An Internet connection is required that permits the Tool to be downloaded and the bid sent in. Therefore, bear in mind that your company's communications system may have a firewall enabled that blocks the downloading of the Tool. To send in a bid, outgoing port 443 must not be blocked. The connection may also not have enough bandwidth to send various MBs.
Assign the Java program to the extension ".jnlp". Here is an example of the steps to follow to do this in Windows 7.

1. Open the Control Panel using the Start button

(Figure 6: Access to the Control Panel).

2. After opening the Control Panel, go to Programs.

(Figure 7: Access to "Programs" from Control Panel).

3. In Programs, click on "Make a file type always open in a specific program".

(Figure 8: Access to "File types").

4. Select the extension .jnlp and click on the "Change program" button at the top right of the screen.

(Figure 9: Selecting the extension .jnlp from the list of extensions).

5. On the new pop-up screen, select Java and press the "OK" button. If the Java icon does not appear in the list of recommended programs, you will need to search for it among "Other programs".

(Figure 10: Assigning Java to the extension .jnlp).

NB: If you have problems uploading and signing files on the Tool, you need to install the 64-bit Java virtual machine instead of the 32-bit machine. Here is an example of how to view your Java machine on the Windows 7 Professional operating system (Control Panel → Programs). If you require technical assistance with this update, please write to: licitacióne@minhafp.es

NB: Although the Windows environment has been used to describe this action, the tool can also be used on other platforms, including Linux and MacOS.

If you would like to receive a guide to configuring Ubuntu, ask at licitacionE@minhafp.es.

2.2.2.2 Maximum Document Size

The bid preparation and submission tool uses the
@firma solution for signing documents. @firma cannot sign documents of more than 5 MB. If you upload a document of a larger size, you will be shown the screen in Figure 11a.

(Figure 11a: You have exceeded the maximum file size).

To be able to upload and then sign documentation, you can do the following:
There is a general tendency to insert high-resolution graphics without compressing them. Please reduce the resolution of your graphics so that documents can be created with the same information but a smaller size, and also compress these same files using Zip or Rar utilities.
Although you will see only one place for uploading documents, you can attach more than one. You can therefore split your bid into 5 MB segments and sign each one of them.

NB: Please follow the preceding steps and bear in mind that, as with other applications that offer the possibility of uploading documents, limits must be imposed.
NB: If the document you are going to upload does not require a signature, there is no such limit.

There is also a limit to the capacity of the Java technology that means that the total size of the bid cannot be exceeded in the following cases:

If you are using a 32-bit version of Java:

The total file size to be signed cannot exceed 27 MB.

If you are using a 64-bit version of Java:

The total file size to be signed cannot exceed 38 MB.

2.2.2.3 Electronic Certificates

Before signing your documents and envelopes, you are recommended to check that you have a valid certificate. Enter the following URL:

https://valide.redsara.es/valide/

And go to Validate Certificate.

You must select your certificate and enter the security code.

(Figure 11b: Checking for a Valid Certificate).

2.2.2.3.1 Permitted certification authorities

The Tool allows documents and envelopes to be signed using electronic certificates from certificate service providers that are recognised by the @firma platform. For more information, follow:

administracionelectronica.gob.es/PAe/aFirma-Anexo-PSC

NB: If you are a foreign company, please contact the contracting authority.

2.2.2.3.1.1 Problems when attempting to sign

2.2.2.3.1.1.1 Empty certificate store

If a bidder attempts to sign without having a certificate installed in the browser, the tool will not open the certificate selection pop-up window. Please import/install the certificate in your browser.

If you perform the previous operation and you still have problems when signing documents, please contact licitacione@minhafp.es.

2.2.2.3.1.1.2 Signing with an expired certificate

If your certificate has expired and you did not notice, when you try to sign using the Tool, you will get the following error message (figure 11c):

(Figure 11c: Expired Certificate Warning).

2.2.2.3.1.1.3 Size of the bid

The partial size of each of the documents that need to be signed may be less than 5 MB, meaning that the tool should allow it to be signed, but you cannot complete the signing of any document. This may be due to the fact that the total size of the bid is such that there is not enough space in the Java virtual machine memory to complete the task.

In this case, it is advisable to empty the Java cache. To do this, go to the Java Control Panel and under the General tab, press the Settings button in the Temporary Internet Files section.

A Temporary Files Settings dialogue box will appear.

Press the Delete Files button and the following dialogue box will be displayed:

On clicking on OK, all applications and applets in the cache are deleted. If you wish to delete only one application or applet that is in the cache, you can do this by clicking on the View button under the General tab.

When attempting to sign, it might be that the application reaches a point at which the signature is not displayed but no error message appears.

In this case, this is due to the limits explained in section 2.2.2.2. The recommendations to follow are:

All duplicate documents, i.e., identical documents uploaded more than once, can be replaced by a very small document saying where the original has been uploaded to.
For example, if the CA asks for document DEUC three times, only upload one copy and, for the

other copies, simply explain where the first one is.

Scanned documents (deeds, documents signed by hand, etc.):

You must try to scan them with the lowest resolution possible, but one that lets them be viewed properly.

NB: The Public Sector Procurement Platform offers a small application to help reduce the size of PDF documents. You can request it from licitacionE@minhafp.es

Catalogues hosted on the Internet:

If the tender calls for catalogues that are hosted on the Internet, it is not necessary to include them: a document stating where they are hosted and how they can be downloaded is sufficient.

NB: Always consult the Specifications. You can also contact the Contracting Authority on how to deal with catalogues.

Drawings:

Including drawings potentially increase the total size of the files to be signed. Ask the Contracting Authority about the possibility of using some other system to submit drawings if it is not possible to upload them.
See section 5.5.

2.3 Access to the Electronic Tendering tool

Access to the Tool for preparing and submitting bids is different for each type of procedure.

2.3.1 Procedures WITHOUT an Invitation

If the procedure starts with the publication of an announcement of a tender and the specifications (not with an invitation to tender), as in the case of open, restricted, negotiated procedures with publicity and competitive dialogues, the process for accessing the tool is the following:

1. The bidder searches for tenders on the Platform (figure 12). For further information on getting around inside the platform, see the “Economic Operators’ Guide”.

(Figure 12: Searching for tenders on the Platform).

2. Select a specific procedure in the search results (figure 13). Those that are preceded by the @ symbol are electronic procedures.

(Figure 13: Accessing a specific tender from the tender search).

3. When you see the details of the procedure, add it to “My Tenders” by clicking on Add this Tender to My Tenders (figures 14 and 15).

NB: My Tenders is the set of procurement procedures that is of interest to a bidder. The company user will receive e-mail alerts when there are updates to the tenders of interest. Further information can be found in the “Economic Operator’s Guide”.

NB: The option of adding a tender to My Tenders is only available to registered users. You will not have this option if you enter the platform as an anonymous user.

(Figure 14: Add tender to My Tenders I).

(Figure 15: Add tender to My Tenders II).

4. After adding a tender, browse to My Tenders, select the tender (Figure 16) and in the detailed view of the tender, click on “Prepare a bid/application for participation (Figure 17)

(Figure 16: Accessing the details of a tender in My Tenders).

(Figure 17: Accessing the tool from “Prepare a bid/application for participation” in My Tenders).

5. The tool starts up automatically on the local computer (Figure 18) and recovers the details of the procedure that the contracting authority registered in the Tender Settings and which were published in the call for tender and specifications.

(Figure 18: Home Page of the tool).

NB: If you have any problems downloading the tool, you may not have associated the “jnlp” file type with the Java Console. To resolve this, the file association must be changed in your computer’s Control Panel, as shown in section 2.2.2.

2.3.2 Procedures WITH an invitation

If the procedure starts with an invitation to the applicant to submit a bid (no call for tender or specifications are published), as in the case of procedures based on a Framework Agreement, negotiated procedures without advertising and minor contracts, access to the tool consists of the following steps:

1. The bidder receives an e-mail at the correspondence address stating that they have received an invitation to submit a bid (figure 19).
2. To access the contents of the notice and view the specifications, you can:

a. Go directly to the contents of the notice using the link in the e-mail message (figure 19).

(Figure 19: E-mail with a link to the contents of the notice).

b. If you do not go to the contents of the notice directly from the e-mail, you can get there from My Notices by finding the invitation (figure 20) and clicking on Enter.

(Figure 20: Accessing the tool from My Communications).

In this case, to access the contents of the notice, you must have an approved electronic certificate.

When in View PDF Document (figure 21), the system displays the notice, in which you can find out the details of the procedure and download the specifications and any other additional documentation using the links provided.

(Figure 21: Downloading the contents of a notice and the timestamp).

3. After accessing the notice by any of the two methods described above, the Reply link is activated, which enables the Bid Preparation and Submission Tool to be downloaded in the same way as for procedures without an invitation, as shown in figure 22.

NB: An economic operator may find No Response instead of the Respond link. This means that either this is not an electronic procedure (and therefore the Tool cannot be enabled) or this is a notice that does not require a reply from the bidder.

(Figure 22: Home Page of the Tool for an Invitation to Submit a Bid).

2.4 Description of the Tool

For each tender and stage of the procedure, therefore, the Tool generates the documentation required, which varies depending on the dossier and on the stage of the procedure (it will not ask for the same information for a correction as for an invitation to submit a bid).

However, the organisation of the information and the actions that can be taken are found in the same place and have the same functionality. Therefore, once familiar with the Tool, you can use it to submit any documentation as part of an electronic procedure on the Public Sector Procurement Platform.

The Tool has a home page (figure 22) showing:

Basic information on the tender:
Dossier.
Contracting authority.
Contract type.
Procedure.
Deadline for submission.
Type (invitation to submit a bid, correction, demand for documentation, etc.).
Object of the contract.

Alternative tasks:
Create a new bid/application for participation/correction – import a bid.
Continue preparing a bid/application for participation/correction

The first time that you download the Tool onto your computer, it is only possible to create a new bid/application for participation/correction or to import a bid/documentation that has been created on a different computer.

The “Continue” option is only enabled when you have downloaded the Tool at least once onto the same computer. Select this option when you wish to continue preparing a bid, keeping what has been done up to that time. If you wish to delete what you have already done, you must select “Create”.

NB: The Tool is downloaded locally and therefore it will only take into account what you have done on your computer. For example, if you worked on computer 1 and then downloaded the Tool onto computer 2 to continue preparing the bid, you will need to export the offer from computer 1, save it on some kind of device (USB, DVD) and import it into computer 2. If you do not wish to keep what you have done up to now, select “Create” and do not import anything onto computer 2.

Select the option you need and click “OK”. The application will automatically take you back to Figure 23.

(Figure 23: View of the inside of the Tool).

The inside of the Bid Preparation and Submission Tool has the following areas:

The Categories are arranged vertically on the left. Each refers to a block of information that is recovered but that also has to be saved, depending on the circumstances:
1. Information on the tender: basic information on the dossier.
2. Information on the bidder: displays information on the company. It is necessary to register the authorised representative or representatives.
3. Permissions: to give or deny permission to the competent body to consult information with third parties.
4. Lots: only if there is a division of the object of the contract.
5. Envelopes: displays the contents of the envelopes and what it is necessary to provide. The envelope identifiers specified by the contracting authority appear in alphabetical order. The signing of documents is enabled from this category.

Actions and basic information are displayed horizontally (as on the Home Page). Actions (i.e., executing functions) are displayed horizontally at the top:
Hide menu: so that the categories are no longer visible.
Import proposal: recovers what was prepared on another computer on the local computer. This action is used, above all, to submit bids as a UTE (temporary consortium) or to continue preparing a bid on another computer.
Export proposal: a copy of what has been prepared is saved locally and can then be imported to another system. This is essential for preparing bids as a UTE.
Validate: this action makes it possible to check whether a step in the presentation is missing before sending in the bid (e.g., a requirement with no supporting evidence or an unsigned document).
Prepare to Send: enables the possibility of submitting the document. This is made up of various actions that will be described below.

Users do not need to prepare a bid all at one time. In fact, it is presumed that, in most cases, the bid will be completed in stages. If the bid has already been started, the home page of the tool suggests the bidder should continue it as one of the possible alternative tasks.

NB: When the preparation of a bid is continued on another computer, it must be exported from the first computer to a storage device and imported onto the second computer. To keep the imported bid, always select the option Create new bid/application for participation
Import the bid into the system where you are going to continue preparation.

When the contracting authority rectifies the call for tender and specifications, two circumstances can occur:

If the bidder has not yet started to prepare a bid, this has no impact.
If the bidder has started to prepare a bid, when he enters the Tool again, the system will warn him that there is a new version. The only possible option is to start to prepare a new bid; otherwise, what is submitted will not match the latest version of the specifications.

WARNING: The Bid Preparation and Submission Tool will not be available once the date (and time) for submitting bids has been passed. After this date, you can view what you have submitted or prepare documentation for another stage (e.g., corrections or required documents). Users are advised not to delay downloading the Tool until the last few hours of the procedure. Technical problems can occur that are not necessarily related with the operation of the Tool or with preparing the bid. For example, it may be impossible to download the Tool due to restrictive settings in the firewall of the user company's installations.

3. Preparing Bids

3.1 Prior Issues

When the tool starts up, warnings or messages may appear that confuse the user.

A list of these is shown below:

(Figure 24: Java is not installed or is not the correct version).

SOLUTION: install the correct version of Java or activate it if it has already been installed For the time being, this is version 1.8. If you have any questions or cannot administer/install programs on your computer, contact your company's IT department.

(Figure 25: Security warning).

SOLUTION: click on the Continue button.

3.2 General Description

As noted above, the Tool is created for each bid and stage. In other words, the contents of the Tool are different for each procedure or even the stages of a procedure. However, the method for preparing documentation/bids is similar in all cases. Therefore, what is explained below applies to the preparation by a bidder of any type of response to a tenderer in a tendering procedure (bids, corrections or required documents).

Generally, the preparation of the documentation using the Tool involves the bidder providing supporting evidence of everything requested by the tenderer, whether this involves entering some text or a value, authorising the consultation of its data on third-party systems or appending and signing documents.

In particular, the preparation of a bid consists of a process of providing evidence of all the prior requirements for participation and entering the financial offer, and the technical offer if there is one, into the Tool.

One of the advantages of the Tool for preparing a bid is that it is possible to unlink the user who prepares the bid (salesperson) from the one who signs it (authorised representative) and even from the person who sends it in (messenger). All this is possible due to functionalities that will be explained below.

This guide will illustrate the basic process for preparing bids that include three envelopes (general documentation, an envelope of criteria submitted for a value judgement and an envelope of criteria that can be evaluated using a formula). However, there are many ways of dealing with envelopes and types of supporting evidence.

NB: In the Tool, bidders will find instructions on everything to do with providing supporting evidence and how to do so (format, signature, which envelope). Anything that is not described in the Tool must not be submitted. For example, if the contracting authority has not defined a technical envelope, bidders must not attach a technical bid.

This process also involves the signing of documentary evidence wherever this is an absolute requirement.

In general, it is necessary to record information (or perform actions) in three categories (Figure 23) or four if there are lots:

02-Bidder: enter the first name, surname(s) and Tax ID no. of the authorised representative, and the nature of the power of attorney. You can also modify the information on your company if there is an error.
03-Permissions: permission is granted or refused for viewing information on you that can be found on third party systems.
04-Bid for lots: select the lot or lots to be included in the bid. The Tool will take into account whether bids are required for all the lots or only one or several.
05-Envelopes: bidders can append documents and specify values for criteria/requirements for which some text has to be entered. You must also sign your documents.

(Figure 26: Categories in the tool).

3.3 Bidder Category

Access to this category is by clicking category 02-Bidder in the side menu. The default screen that opens is the one shown in figure 27. On this screen, if you press the “New” button, you will go to the form for registering authorised representatives

(Figure 27: Bidder Category).

Information on the company is shown at the top, namely:

Company Name
Identifier

This information is inherited from the user who downloaded the Tool to prepare the bid or from the information that the tenderer entered to send the invitation to submit a bid.

This information can be modified. For example, the tenderer has not put the correct company name on the invitation to tender. The bidder user can change the information in the Tool by entering the company’s correct name.

On accessing the screen (Figure 28), fill in the information requested about the authorised representative and add it to the table.

(Figure 28: Bidder Category – Entering Information on the Authorised Representative).

If necessary, you will need to repeat the action described in this section for each of the authorised representatives you have to register.

After completing this step, before selecting another category from the side menu, you must press “Save”.

If you are a temporary consortium (UTE), you must select the “UTE” option in the type of company field as shown in Figure 29

(Figure 29: Bidder Category – UTE Selection).

After selecting this option, as well as listing the authorised representatives who are going to sign the bid, an additional section is displayed in which you must list the companies that make up the UTE. To do this, as shown in figure 30, you must click on the New button at the bottom of the screen.

(Figure 30: Bidder Category – Registering a UTE Company).

The tool displays the form in figure 31, where the information on the company that forms part of the UTE and its representative is entered

(Figure 31: Bidder Category – UTE Company Registration Form).

After entering the information requested, the screen shown in figure 32 appears.

(Figure 32: Bidder Category – final view).

3.4 Permissions Category

Access to the permissions category is from the Categories side menu. The system displays a screen like the one in figure 33. On this screen, you must select which type of authorisations are permitted both in the use of electronic communications and access to the administration’s third-party systems.

NB: The authorisation or refusal of permission to consult information in the power of third parties is made as part of a specific procurement procedure and for the time that this procedure lasts.

(Figure 33: Permissions Category).

Before selecting another category or action, you must save your changes by pressing the “Save” button

3.5 Lots Category

Use this category to select the lots for which you intend to bid (figure 34). Bear in mind that the Contracting Authority may establish a series of rules:

Mandatory bidding for all lots
Mandatory bidding for one single lot
Bidding for one or several lots

The application will restrict the possible selections that the economic operator can make.

(Figure 34: Lots Category – Selecting the lots to bid for).

3.6 Envelopes Category

This category is used for everything that is requested in an envelope and for signing documents. When this category is selected on the side menu, as shown in figure 35, the envelopes appear in alphabetical order according to the name given to them by the contracting authority when defining them.

(Figure 35: Envelopes Category – Document contents and signing option).

If the tender is in lots, you must fill in the information required for each lot in the different envelopes (figure 36).

(Figure 36: Lots Category).

General documentation envelopes or administrative envelopes have two views:

Document view (figure 37): informs the bidder which documents he must submit.

(Figure 37: Document View: What must I submit?).

Requirements view (figure 38): so that the applicant knows which requirements he must meet. This view includes not only documentary evidence but also when a value or some text has to be entered or permission for the consultation of third-party systems

(Figure 38: Requirements View – what conditions must I meet?).

(Figure 39: Template and link to document attachment).

As shown in figure 39, the system allows bidders to download templates/programs provided by the contracting authority for creating documents or bids.

NB: By clicking on the Template link, you can download a template to your local system and fill it out as required by the tenderer. Remember that these templates tend to correspond to the annexes that form the final pages of specifications.

For the document annex (whether you are using a template or not), click on the link shown in figure 39 to display the following screen (figure 40).

(Figure 40: Document annex).

The list of requirements to be proven by that specific document is shown at the top. Clicking on the “Attach Document” button triggers the file explorer, where you can select the document that needs to be attached (Figure 41).

(Figure 41: Selecting the document to attach).

The system suggests the format for the documents that the bidder must upload, as set by the tenderer in the Tender Settings.

(Figure 42: Selecting the document to attach).

When the bidder uploads a document in a format that does not match that required by the tenderer, the system warns them of this circumstance (figure 42). However, the document can be attached using the dropdown list in the File Type field in figure 43. The body responsible for evaluation will decide whether it will permit the document or not.

After attaching the document, the system confirms it has been entered correctly with the following message.

(Figure 43: Confirmation message).

If anyone from a UTE submits a document, the screen in figure 44 will appear, in which it is necessary to specify whether the document is common to the UTE or specific to one company.

(Figure 44: Upload UTE document).

In cases in which a requested document is not common to the entire UTE and each company links its own document(s), it is a mandatory condition that, to satisfy this requirement, ALL the companies upload the appropriate document.

Once the document(s) have been attached, the screen in figure 45 appears. In the “Status” column, when the indicator for a document is red, this means that it has not been signed and therefore is not ready. You must select the corresponding document and click on the “Sign selected document” button.

(Figure 45: Selecting a document for signature).

When you press this button, the Tool prepares to sign the document (figure 46).

(Figure 46 Signing the document).

After this, the available electronic signatures are submitted (either from the browser or certificates stored in a smartcard) (Figure 47).

(Figure 47 Selecting the certificate).

If the signing process works correctly, the message in figure 48 is displayed.

(Figure 48: Document signature confirmation message).

After the signing takes place, the system displays the identity of the signer (figure 49). If you click on the xml tab, you can see the signature in XAdES format (figure 50).

(Figure 49: Identity of the signer).

(Figure 50: View of a XADES signature).

To return to the list of documents to be signed, click on the “Back” button or the “Sign documents” link in the side menu

(Figure 51: View of Back to Signature).

Once again, on the general documentation envelope main screen, you can view the status of the documents. Those that have already been signed are in green (figure 52).

(Figure 52: Signed document).

NB: The Tool offers the possibility of co-signatures, i.e., a number of signatures by different signers on the same document.

If a requirement must be accredited by permitting the consultation of a third party system, go to View Requirements (figure 39) and click on the corresponding requirement (Figure 53)

(Figure 53: Permission to consult a third-party system: general documentation envelope).

The method for creating the other envelopes is very similar. For example, figure 54 shows the contents of an envelope containing criteria that can be evaluated using a formula. Browse to its contents by clicking on the name “envelope 2” in the category side menu. As seen previously, the system displays the options in the central panel.

(Figure 54: View of a financial envelope).

If the criterion for awarding is underlined and is blue, this means that you must go in and enter a value. In the example given here, this is the proposed price. The Tool enables boxes for entering the amount with and without tax (figure 55). After entering the value, click on the Save button.

(Figure 55: Entering a price criterion).

The system performs controls of the price of the bid and warns if it is higher than the threshold amount.

(Figure 56: View of a financial envelope).

After entering and saving the price, you must attach the financial offer, as shown in figure 57, enabling the link(s) for adding the documentation.

(Figure 57: View of financial offer attachment).

Click on the link to attach the document. The “bidder help text” may contain instructions from the tenderer for the applicant (Figure 58).

(Figure 58: Financial offer attachment).

After attaching the document, you can see the filename and its status. As shown in figure 59, the default document status is yellow. This means that it is not yet ready as signature is required. To do this, click on “Sign documents” in the side menu.

NB: In addition to adding one or various documents per entry, it is possible to delete one or all of them using the icon.

(Figure 59: View of the financial offer document before signature).

The process for signing a financial offer, like any other document in the Tool, is similar to the process described in figures 45 to 53.

Once it is signed, the envelope displays the criteria that can be evaluated using a formula with green validation icons (figure 60).

(Figure 60: View of an financial envelope after signature).

3.7 Special case of lots

If the tender includes lots, figure 61 is displayed.

(Figure 61: Bid for Lots Category).

The procedure is similar to that described but it is necessary to indicate which lot or lots you intend to bid on. You must also take this information into account in every envelope.

4. Other actions

At the top of the Tool is a series of actions that appear as buttons (figure 63). This section describes all of them, except for Prepare to Send, which has its own specific section.
(Figure 67: Tool actions).

4.1 Validate Action

When the required information has been entered as text or a value or by uploading documents, it is very useful to use the Validate action.

By using this action, among other things the bidder checks whether any requirement/criterion still requires supporting evidence.
Validation also includes checking for the existence of the signature on documents for which this is required.

(Figure 63: Validate Action).

When all the categories have been filled in correctly, they will all be green (figure 64). If not, those for which it is necessary to complete some action (attach a document or sign it, enter a value or text for some requirement or criterion) will appear in red (figure 65):

(Figure 69: Categories correctly completed).

(Figure 70: Categories not completed).

4.2 Key

This shows the meaning of the coloured icons that appear next to requirements/criteria and documents for the envelopes (figure 71) signalling whether they have been correctly confirmed.

(Figure 71: Key).

4.3 Import/Export Bid

The Import/Export Bid option has the following purposes:

For the various members of a UTE to prepare their bid.
To continue a bid on another computer.
To send the bid to the authorised representative so that they can sign it using their own resources. To send the signed bid back to the preparer (when the authorised representative decides not to send it in themselves).

EXAMPLE 1: Member 1 of the UTE creates a bid. They export it with the signed documents. They send it by e-mail (or by electronic messaging) to member 2, who imports the bid, attaches their own documentation (e.g., an individual classification certificate) and signs their own copy and the common document (e.g., the financial offer). Then they export the bid with the envelopes with their own signature so that member 1 can also sign them, after importing them. Finally, member 1 sends in the bid. This operation can be replaced by preparing the bid on one single computer; however, this obliges all the preparers and authorised representatives to meet to create and sign the proposals together (an electronic certificate cannot be "borrowed").

EXAMPLE 2: The salesperson of a company creates the entire bid, except for the signature of the authorised representative. Since the representative has gone on a trip and they cannot meet in person, the salesperson exports the proposal and sends it to the authorised representative by e-mail. The representative connects using the preparer's credentials (if they do not have their own) and downloads the tool. They select the alternative task "Import Bid" on the Home Page of the Tool. Next, they press the "Import Proposal" button and upload the information into the Tool. They sign the documents and envelopes and send them in.

NB: The offer can be exported/imported as many times as necessary, with the signatures included. The only point that must be borne in mind is not to sign the envelope if a document in it has not been signed. Therefore, it is normal to export/import the proposal with unsigned envelopes and the person who sends it in will sign the envelopes before doing this. However, there is a possibility of exporting the signed bid in its entirety (documents and envelopes) so that a third party can carry out only the action of sending in the bid.

First of all, export the bid by pressing the Export Proposal button. The file explorer opens up (figure 72) so that the file can be saved to the electronic medium selected (computer, USB, DVD, etc.).

(Figure 72: Exporting a proposal to a local computer or external device).

The person who receives the proposal must always select the alternative task "Create bid/application for participation – Import bid" (figure 73), otherwise the information they have received from a third party (another member of the UTE, salesperson or administrator) will not be recovered.

(Figure 73: Alternative task: Import Bid).

To complete the import process, click on the "Import Bid" button (figure 74) and upload all the inherited information into the Tool.

(Figure 74: Import Proposal Button).

After uploading the information, the user must attach new documents (in the case of a UTE) or have the documents and envelopes signed (in all cases, by the authorised representative).

5. Prepare to Send

At the top of the Tool is a Prepare to Send button (figure 75), which displays a screen (figure 76) with a number of actions relating to sending in the bid.

Signing envelopes.
Change selected: allows the contents of the envelope to be changed after signing. If the contents of the envelope are changed, it must be signed again since the original electronic signature will no longer be valid.
Simulate submission: the applicant can check that the Platform is available to receive offers. The simulation follows all the steps of checking the documentation and encryption except for sending it in.
Submit documentation: sends in the documents and automatically generates a receipt. The bids are also encrypted as a mandatory requirement for sending.
Download receipt: as long as sending has already taken place, this allows the receipt to be downloaded. However, when sending takes place, this action appears on the screen and can be used for saving and printing.
Generate labels: if an envelope is to be submitted in person (model or samples), the system permits the creation of labels so that the tenderer can easily identify what is to be evaluated.

(Figure 75: Prepare to Send Button).

(Figure 76: Possible Prepare to Send actions).

5.1 Signing envelopes

In general, sending in documentation in envelopes requires that each of the envelopes in the bid be signed, including the envelope with permissions for consulting third-party data. However, whether signing is mandatory or not depends solely on whether the tenderer has made this a requirement for bidding. In all cases, bidder users will know if an envelope must be signed or not because the “Status” icon will be red if signing is required and has not been done.

NB: Remember that if any aspect of the bid is missing, such as attaching a document or signing an envelope or document, the Tool will not allow the bid to be sent in and will warn the user of this circumstance.

The signing process is similar to that described for signing a document. First, check the box next to the envelope that you wish to sign (figure 77) and press the Sign Selected button. Immediately after this, you will go to a second screen where you press the Sign button (figure 78), which requires the provision of the electronic signature (figure 79) and then signing takes place.

It may be that the application does not allow you to sign but no error message appears. This situation is described in section 2.2.2.2

In this case, you must reduce the size of the bid by about 2MB as the total size is close to Java's technological limit. To do this, click on Modify Selection, reduce the file size and then sign the envelope again.

(Figure 77: Selecting the envelope for signature).

(Figure 78: View of the signature of an envelope with contents).

(Figure 79: Selecting the electronic signature for signing).

When the envelope has been signed, the identity of the signer is displayed (figure 80) and under the XML tab, a view of the signed envelope (figure 81)

(Figure 80: Identity of the signer of the envelope).

(Figure 81: View of a signed envelope).

NB: In the section on Technical Requirements is a description of a number of problems related with electronic signatures and certificates. Please consult this section if you have any problems with the signing process.

5.2 Changing envelopes

The Tool allows you to change the contents of an envelope (Change Selected button) at any time before sending it in. However, if the envelope that you wish to change has been signed, it is necessary to sign it again after making the change, as the Tool will warn you (figure 82).

(Figure 82: Warning of a change to a signed envelope).

5.3 Simulate Submission

Before you send in a bid or documentation, the Tool allows you to check whether the Public Sector Procurement Platform is available to receive it. Remember that until the bidder presses the Send button, the documentation remains on the local computer. It is therefore useful to check that the servers are active before sending.

Press the Simulate Submission button and, if everything is correct, the Tool will notify you of a successful result (figure 83). You can now send in the envelopes.

(Figure 83: Satisfactory result of a submission simulation).

5.4 Submitting documentation

The Submit Documentation action leads to the submission of the bid/documentation that has been prepared on the local computer by the bidder user, so that it can go into safekeeping on the servers of the Directorate-General of State Assets.

The sending process encrypts the envelopes, if this has been specified by the contracting authority.

Encrypting the envelopes guarantees the confidentiality of the contents. It provides a basic security layer to ensure the safekeeping of the bids, although it is not the only one.

The action of encrypting the envelopes is completely transparent for the user who is sending in the bid as it is one of the basic actions during the submission of envelopes.

NB: The content of the envelopes in the submission receipt will not be able to be viewed if they have been encrypted.

When you press “Submit Documentation”, the system opens a pop-up progress window (figure 84) and finally the receipt appears on the screen (figure 85).

(Figure 84: Pop-up progress window during submission).

(Figure 85: On-screen display of the receipt).

The receipt shows the basic information on the bidder and a summary of the submission, which includes:

Set of envelopes comprising the bid, including the permissions envelope.
Contents of the envelopes (displayed as long as they are not encrypted).
Signing of the documents and envelopes.

The receipt must be downloaded and printed (figure 86). It is also sent to the correspondence e-mail address (figure 87).

(Figure 86: PDF of the receipt).

(Figure 87: E-mail with the SVC of the receipt).

The receipt includes an SVC (Secure Verification Code) that guarantees the integrity of the document, after it has been checked by the Public Sector Procurement Platform (figure 88).

(Figure 88: Checking the SVC on the Public Sector Procurement Platform).

5.5 Creating Labels

In proceedings in which one or more of the envelopes cannot be submitted telematically (models, samples, etc.), the Tool generates labels that link the electronic fingerprint of the envelope with the item that will be submitted as a physical record.

The labels cannot be created until after sending.

When the Create Labels button is pressed, the system sends the information for building the labels for the physical envelope to the selected printer.

5.6 Problems with Sending

5.6.1 The documentation fails to get through.

There are two important cases in which a sending error can occur:

The simulation is correct but the documentation fails to get through.

This situation means that the connection with the platform is correct but an error occurred when the bid was entered.

Two situations can occur here:

1. The platform reports a specific error.

2. The platform does not report an error, the bar disappears or the waiting time exceeds 10 minutes

In either of these two cases, you must contact licitacionE@minhafp.es so that they can solve the problem.

NB: For example, a UTE that enters decimals in its composition. The application will warn that there has been a FormatNumber error.

Both the simulation and the submission fail to get through.

There are three situations that could cause this error:

1. The Internet line upload speed is not fast enough.

The maximum time for sending in documentation is 10 minutes. The formula for checking whether you have a suitable connection is as follows:

tupload=
Size of Bid (KB) · 1.5 (time on the Platform)
(Upload speed (Mbps/8) · 1024/1.2(line loss)

NB: On the Internet there are innumerable speed tests for calculating the speed of your line.

For example, if your line has an upload speed of 0.51 Mbps (ADSL lines) and the size of your file is 25MB:

tupload=
25000 (KB) · 1.5 (time on the Platform) = 37500
(0.51 (Mbps/8) · 1024/1.2 (line loss)
54.4
690 sec

In other words, the documentation may not upload.

The recommended solutions for this problem are:

Export the proposal, which will generate a completely signed xml file, and import it into another computer with a better connection.

Connect the computer to a mobile phone with a 4g connection, if possible (normally mobile connections of this type have an acceptable upload speed.

Reduce the size of the proposal if possible, at the discretion of the bidder.

2. There is no connection with the platform.

This is the most difficult problem to detect. The tool cannot set the connection tunnel to the platform.
This tends to happen frequently on computers that are connected to a domain due to security policies.

If you find yourself in this situation, you can try the solutions recommended for the previous case:

Take the computer off the domain for a short time, connect it directly to the Internet and try sending. (Only if your domain administrators and company policy allow this).

Check with the administrator whether the domain server is blocking the application's external connection.

Review point 3 (antivirus).

3. Antivirus

Modern antivirus programs have firewall tools that can prevent proposals from being sent.

Cases have been reported for at least two antivirus programs: Karpersky and Avast (both on computers connected to a domain and those not connected to a domain).

In some cases it is enough to simply deactivate the antivirus program using the normal methods that it indicates.

If you find yourself in this situation, try uninstalling it completely, sending in the files and reinstalling the antivirus.

NB: Remember that you must not send in the documentation again if it has already been sent successfully.

5.6.2 Sending was successful but I can't download the receipt.

Cases have been reported in which the bidder cannot download the receipt even though the bid was sent successfully.

In this case, please contact the Platform (licitacionE@minhafp.es) or the contracting authority immediately to find out if it really was sent successfully.

Do NOT try to submit it again. Submitting twice can be a reason for exclusion.

6. Monitoring the procedure
The system allows bidders to monitor the series of actions performed for a specific tendering process.

Use My Bids to monitor your progress (figure 89).

(Figure 89: Steps / Actions Taken).

NB: If the procedure is by invitation, go to “My Communications”, add the procedure to My Communications and then you will have the Steps / Actions Taken option available to you.

The system allows you to View the submitted bid, provided the status of the procedure is evaluation or a subsequent stage. This functionality starts up the tool in read mode, which will allow you to view the bid, without your being able to take any action (figure 90).

(Figure 90: View submitted bid and table of tenders).

(Figure 91: Home page of the tool for viewing a submitted bid).

Lastly, you should note that bidders, as an interested party in the procedure, can view a Table of Tenders (figure 92) in which the body with the power to make the evaluation may provide a variety of documents regarding the evaluation of the bids, such as a list of the scores for the different applicants or the bid of the proposed awardee.

(Figure 92: View of documents in the Table of Tenders).

7. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

PSPP Platform
Public Sector Procurement Platform http://contrataciondelestado.es/

CA	Contracting Authority.
EO	Economic Operator.
XML	Extensible Markup Language.
SVC	Secure Verification Code
UTE	Temporary Consortium
USB	Universal Serial Bus
XAdES	XML Advanced Electronic Signature

8. CONTACT US

Remember that if you encounter any problems when preparing or sending in bids, you should contact:
licitacionE@minhafp.es

Please indicate the contracting authority making the tender in your message. Send in all the evidence that you can to help us solve your problem.
IMPORTANT: If you do not contact us by e-mail, your claims and complaints cannot be taken into consideration by the contracting authority.