## Making Requests for Proposals (RFP) work for you

* **Is a RFP the best way forward?**Ensure you know the market and the product thoroughly before issuing a request for proposal. If this is not the case, consider first issuing a Request for Information (RFI) to gather information on possible solutions.
* **Protect your confidential information**A confidentiality statement in a RFP is not enough to protect confidential information disclosed within the document. Acceptance of the statement does not occur until a proposal has been tendered. Protect your confidential information by having a confidentiality agreement signed – prior to issuing the RFP to any interested party.
* **Does your RFP protect you?**An effective RFP is one which allows flexibility. It should be drafted to allow:
* Non-complying bids to be accepted
* The ability to change, terminate or halt the process at any time at your own discretion
* Limitation of your liability
* Specifics regarding the negotiation and selection process – as long as you are prepared to be bound to this.
* **Should the contract be attached to the RFP?**

Unless the contract has been specifically tailored to the RFP, think twice before you attach it. You may find later that you are bound to a contract which is too broad and does not effectively serve your purposes.

* **Do not breach the suppliers’ confidentiality in responses to RFPs**
  + - * Make sure your evaluation teams properly understand the concepts of confidentiality and intellectual property
      * Don’t identify any of the potential suppliers to each other during negotiations – either directly or by making them easily identifiable.
* **Assessment of bids**
  + - * Assess all bid consistently according to the data supplied in the RFP
      * Document all decision making steps – to prevent any litigation by unsuccessful suppliers.
      * Don’t announce the successful supplier until the contract is signed and delivered to you.