



KETE MĀTAURANGA

A SMALL BUSINESSES GUIDE TO
GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

VOLUME TWO OF THREE
COMMISSIONED BY TE MATARAU A MĀUI

INTRODUCTION

The name Kete Mātauranga comes from an ancient Māori legend called Ngā kete e toru o te mātauranga – the three baskets of knowledge.

In one version of this legend, the Atua (god) Tāne went to the highest heaven to bring the baskets of knowledge back down to help people.

Just like that story, this e-book is part of a set of three kete.

- Volume One shares knowledge about what government procurement is.
- Volume Two (this book) explains how the government buys things.
- Volume Three is a space for you to collect and prepare your business information, so you're ready to bid for government mahi.

Together, these three kete are free and publicly available.

We also know that learning is needed for both the government and business, so we can truly honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi. That means making sure government systems work better for Māori, and that Māori businesses are supported to succeed. This guide is one small step in that bigger journey of transformation and partnership.

Whakamihi

Kete Mātauranga was commissioned by Te Matarau a Māui and written by Melanie Ahnau. The series has been created with the hope that it will help the Māori economy grow and thrive, and to support more Māori businesses to be part of government mahi.





CHAPTERS (NGĀ WĀHANGA)

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WĀHANGA TUATAHI:

HOW DOES
PROCUREMENT
WORK?

How does procurement work?

When a government agency wants to buy something or get help with a job, they send out a message asking businesses to tell them what they can offer. These messages might be called a Request for Quote (RFQ), Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Tender (RFT), Request for Information (RFI), or a Registration of Interest (ROI).

All of these are ways to invite businesses to apply for the mahi, and they are often shared on the GETS website. In this guide, we'll call them "Request for X" to make it simple. You can learn more about each type further on in this book.

When you respond to a Request for X, you'll be asked to answer a few questions about how your business would do the job or deliver the goods or service. A group of around 3 to 6 people from the government will read and discuss your answers.

They will use something called evaluation criteria, which are the important things they're looking for to help them decide which business is the best fit and offers the best value for money.

Value for money doesn't always mean the cheapest price. It means the government wants the best outcome for the money they spend. That could include things like:

1. A good quality service for a fair price,
2. A product that lasts longer and doesn't cost much to maintain,
3. A business with skilled staff or lots of experience,
4. A new or smart way of doing things that saves money in the long run,
5. Or any other way a business can add extra value.

The agency will also decide how important each part of your answer is. They do this using "weighted scores". For example, they might say that price is worth 30% of the total score, and your experience is worth 40%. Each bid will get a total score out of 100%. The scores are compared, and the business with the highest score usually gets the job.





Example: Removing Graffiti from Bus Shelters

Let's imagine the government wants to find a business to remove graffiti from bus shelters in the Wellington region. They send out a Request for X, and a few businesses send in their answers.

The agency decides what's important to them and gives each part a percentage, called a weighted attribute. Each business will be scored out of 100%. Here's how they might break it down:

What they're looking at	Weight	What this means
Experience	20%	They want to know how much experience your business has removing graffiti from bus shelters. If you've done this before, especially in the Wellington region, and worked well with local communities, you might get a high score like 20%. If you haven't done it before, your score might be lower.
Graffiti removal methods	40%	This is the biggest part. They want to know how your business removes graffiti. If your method is gentle on the shelters (like using non-damaging chemicals) and works well, you could score high. If your method damages the shelter (like sanding off paint), you might score low. If you've come up with a smart new way that works even better, you might get full marks – 40%!
How many staff you'll use	15%	They want to see if you've got the right number of trained people to do the job well. Too many staff might cost too much. Too few might mean the work won't get done. The best score will go to businesses that show they understand how much work is needed and have just the right team.
Cost	25%	They'll look at how much you say it will cost to remove all the graffiti – around 16,000 square metres a year. A good price is one that's fair, covers your costs, and gives you a fair profit. If the price is too low, they might ask how you'll make it work. Lower prices often get higher scores, but only if the service still looks reliable.

The total score is out of 100. This example shows how the government uses weighted scoring to pick the best business for the job, not just the cheapest, but the one that gives the best overall value.



WĀHANGA TUARUA:
DIFFERENT REQUESTS
FOR WORK

Different government requests for work

Many government jobs and contracts are shared on GETS, but not all of them are.

Sometimes, if the work is valued at under \$100,000, a government agency may go directly to a business and offer them the job without posting it online. This is called a Direct Source.

For most other situations, the agency will invite businesses to apply by using different kinds of requests. These are official documents that ask for quotes, proposals, tenders, or information, depending on what the agency needs.

There are five main types of requests the government might use to connect with businesses. Most of these will be posted on GETS, and each one has a slightly different purpose. Let's break them down:

1. Direct Source

If the job costs less than \$100,000, the agency can either ask just one business to do it or request quotes from a number of businesses. They don't have to ask more than three businesses to apply.

2. Request for Quote (RFQ)

The agency asks a few simple questions and mainly wants to know how much you'll charge.

3. Request for Tender or Proposal (RFT/RFP)

The agency knows what they want (like building a house in Kaitaia), and they want to know how you'd do it and what it will cost.

4. Registration of Interest (ROI)

This is the first step in a two-step process. If lots of businesses are interested, they use this to make a shortlist of the highest-scoring businesses. Only shortlisted businesses will be invited to the next step, which is usually a request for tender or proposal.

5. Request for Information (RFI)

This isn't a job offer, it's just the agency trying to learn more. For example, they might ask, "How many businesses can remove graffiti in Wellington?" Your answers might help them write a future tender. It's a good way to introduce your business, even if there's no job yet.



What Documents Will You See?

When a request is posted on GETS, it usually comes with five main documents. Each one has a different job:

1. The Front-End Document or RFP Document

This gives you an overview of the job, what they're buying, why it matters, any background work already done, who to contact, and key due dates. This is just for you to read and understand the opportunity.

2. The Non-Price Response Form

This is where you'll answer all the agency's questions except for the price. This way, the team reading the responses can focus on quality first, without being influenced by the cost.

3. The Price Response Form

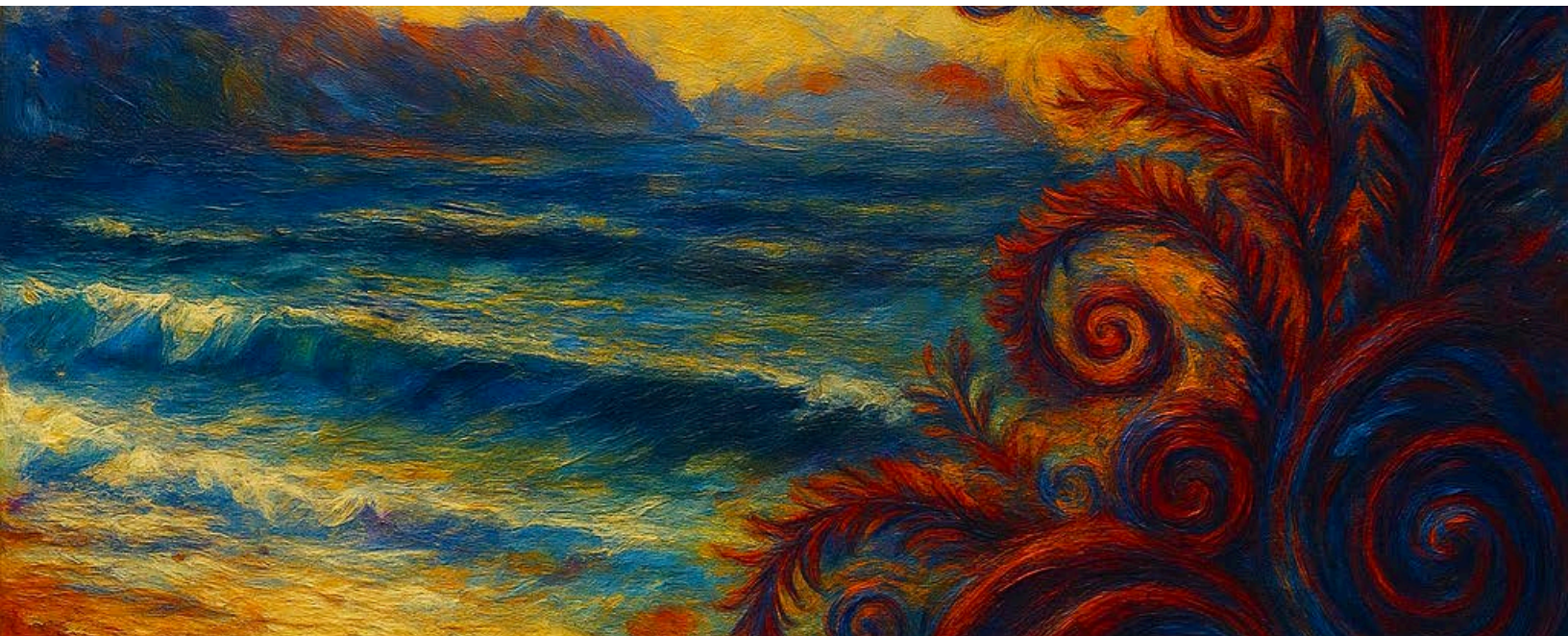
This is where you'll share your costs. It must be kept separate from your other answers to make sure the price doesn't affect the quality scoring.

4. The Contract

The agency will give you a draft contract, so you can see the terms you'd be agreeing to. If any part feels unfair, you can suggest changes in the section called "Contract Tags," found in the response forms.

5. Appendices or Schedules

These are extra documents, which might include technical details, forms about Health and Safety, or other information, depending on what's being bought.





WĀHANGA TUATORU:

GETTING READY
TO BID



Asking questions about the job

Once a request is posted on GETS, there's usually a short period of time (about 1 to 2 weeks) when you can ask the government agency questions about the job.

This is called the question period. It's your chance to make sure you understand the project properly or to check what a question in the tender means.

If you have questions, you can ask them by:

- Sending a message through GETS, or
- Emailing the Point of Contact listed in the front part of the request front-end document.

After the question period ends, you'll have around 2 more weeks to prepare and send in your answers.

It's really important to check all the dates so that you don't miss any of the timeframes.

Helpful documents

Before you apply for a government job, it's a good idea to get some important documents and information ready. These help show that your business is reliable, safe, and ready to do the work.

Here are some examples:

1. Profiles for your key staff – A short description of the people who will do the work and what skills or experience they have.
2. A list of your tools or equipment – Like a van with graffiti removal gear or a water blaster.
3. Certificates or safety documents – Like Health & Safety training, licences, or permission to work with chemicals or hazardous goods.
4. Proof that your business is financially okay – For example, your IR3 tax return or a simple income and expenses report.
5. Contact details for referees – People who can say that you've done a good job on past projects.
6. Photos or examples of past work – These help show what you've done before and what kind of results you can deliver.
7. Your business information – Like your business number, GST number (if you have one), and address.

Having this information ready makes it much easier to fill out the tender forms and respond with confidence.



Next Steps: Get Comfortable Exploring GETS

Now that you've learned more about how government buying works, your next step is to explore the GETS website and start getting familiar with how tenders look.

This is not about applying for jobs just yet. It's about taking a look around, downloading a few tender documents, and learning how things are set out, like what kinds of questions are asked, where to find key dates, and what the contracts might look like.

Here's what you can do:

1. Register on GETS if you haven't already – it's free.
2. Subscribe to job alerts in any area you're interested in, even if you're just curious. You can choose as many categories and industries as you like.
3. Download some tender documents and have a read through. Look for things like: What is the agency buying? What do they ask businesses to provide? What are the timelines? How long is the question period?

Don't worry, you can't break anything by looking. As long as you don't upload or submit a response, you're just exploring, and that's fine.

This stage is all about building confidence. The more tenders you read, the easier it will be to understand them when the time comes to apply.

Take your time, explore as much as you like, and get comfortable with the system. You're doing great, and when you're ready, Volume Three will help you prepare your business to apply.



Nga Mihi

We hope this kete has helped you understand government procurement a little more. Please visit our website to find volume three of this series and for more tools and information at <https://tematarau.co.nz/>