

What's in a Proposal

In some cases, a proposal can be as simple as an engagement letter, as discussed in section 5.5. In other words, you describe what services you will provide based on your discussions with the client.

However, government departments and some other corporate clients use a more complex “Request for Proposal” or RFP process to select event planners. As a potential “supplier” of event planning services to government, you would receive an RFP. (To be invited to submit a proposal you will first have to ensure government departments and agencies are aware of your services.) When you submit your proposal, you are **making a “bid”** to do the work.

A typical RFP is a document that provides information about the organization, their needs, the target audience, what they require in a proposal, and specific instructions for submission of the proposal. You should expect to sell your company’s suitability to handle the event, your fees and any other pertinent information. Here is an example of the type of information that might be expected in a proposal:

- A **description** of your company
- Demonstration of your **capability** to develop and deliver the event
- A proposed **timetable**
- A fixed **price quotation** for development and delivery of the event
- Specific **resources** (such as employees) that you will assign to the project
- **References** from organizations you have done similar events for
- An explanation of how you will **measure results**

The bid process may also require you to make an **oral presentation**. The organization requesting the RFP may hold a session (sometimes called a **bidding meeting**) for interested parties (event planners and other suppliers) to attend to learn more about the event before submitting their response to the RFP. This is the time to ask questions and elicit clear answers. The more clearly you understand the goals and purpose of the event, the better your chances of being the successful bidder.