

Award procedure

The award of research projects within the German Mobile Telecommunication Research Programme is subject to a standardised procedure. This procedure follows along the lines of legal requirements existing for departmental research projects of the Federal Government, such as the implementation of the Environmental Research Plan (UFO PLAN) of the Federal Ministry for the Environment¹. The following passages are supposed to give a quick overview of the procedure for the award of research projects. You will find more detailed information e.g. in the German official contracting terms for award of service performance contracts (VOL; cf. footnote 1).

The award procedure is divided into two parts, i.e. [call for tenders](#) and [award of the research project](#).

¹ Some of the relevant ordinances are available on the internet (German versions):
<http://www.bmwi.bund.de/BMWi/Navigation/Wirtschaft/Wirtschaftspolitik/oeffentliche-auftraege.html>

I. Call for tenders

A call for tenders for a research project usually starts with a **public competition** and is then conducted in the form of a **restricted call for tenders** at selected organisations. A **single tender action** is also possible, although rarely undertaken.

Services are generally subject to tendering, i.e. an unlimited number of tenderers have the chance to submit their tenders. However, since the list of potential tenderers for projects within the German Mobile Telecommunication Research Programme is rather limited, the usual procedure is as follows: In a **public competition** the circle of potentially suitable researchers who are interested in the relevant project is selected from a broad range of candidates and is assessed with respect to economic and technical aspects. This involves a call for expression of interest. The subjects of the scheduled research projects are presented to the public in daily newspapers, professional journals and on the internet, while research institutions and scientists are invited to express their interest in the different projects. Such expressions of interest must include information on the subject-specific professional qualification of the prospective contractors and on the human and technical resources they have available. A list of prospective researchers is prepared by evaluation of these expressions of interest.

In the event that it is sufficiently known which scientists or organisations can be considered for the realisation of a project because of their expert competence, it is also possible to issue a **restricted call for tenders**. In this case there will be no public competition.

In the event that, in exceptional cases, the search for a number of potential researchers has shown that the project work can only be carried out by one particular contractor because of the required expertise, it is possible to undertake a **single tender action** for a project. In this case the respective contractor will be directly invited to submit a tender.

The term of the offering period or call for tenders is defined according to the contents of the research project to be dealt with, it is typically between 4 and 8 weeks. At the beginning of the offering period the selected potential contractors receive information on the requirements for the procedure as well as the service specification and/or project description. The service specification contains detailed information on the project requirements, such as the exact objectives, the problems to be dealt with and, where necessary, specifications relating to the research methods to be deployed. This ensures that all tenderers have the same information on the research project at their disposal so that everyone has the same chances to be selected to perform the project.

II. Award of the research project

The evaluation of the tenders submitted is based, on the one hand, on compliance with the requirements for the procedure and, on the other hand, on the technical quality as well as the price/performance ratio of the tender. A fundamental principle for the technical evaluation is the question to what extent the requirements of the service specification are met. On the basis of these evaluation factors the decision is made in favour of the contractor who has submitted the most cost-effective offer.

In the event that, in exceptional cases, the evaluation of the offers submitted shows that none of the tenders is economically acceptable or that none of the tenders sufficiently fulfils the requirements of the service specification, the call for tenders can be annulled. The tenders will be informed of the annulment. Thereafter it is possible to enter into negotiations with the most promising tenderers to discuss their offer. If such negotiations are successful, the research project can be awarded to one of these tenders in the form of a single tender action.