

[News story: The SME spend target must go on](#)

As shown in the latest figures from 2015/16, over £12bn worth of central government work was delivered by SMEs in that year, and there's effort underway to ensure this figure continues to rise:

Regular webinars

Introducing small business owners to platforms such as [Contracts Finder](#), services like [Mystery Shopper](#), and buyers who set out the type of products and services they're after. In the space of 30 minutes, with a conversation accessible from anywhere, these online events connect SMEs with the people in government who are working to make it easier for small firms to win work.

Meet the Buyer events

Face to face meet the buyer events are on the rise with cross departmental events, the popular and annual [NDA supplier show](#), and sector focused innovation and buying exchanges such as [Defence Contracts Online](#) and [Transport Systems Catapult](#). We are looking to collate these events on a single page so SMEs have one point of access to find out what's happening in their sector/locality.

Advice and guidance for SMEs

A free [selling to the public sector guide](#) offers top tips and testimonials from entrepreneurs who've been there and done it, in addition to [4 videos featuring advice and guidance for SMEs](#), from SMEs, wanting to work with government.

SME Panel

A passionate group of entrepreneurs, in the form of an [SME Panel](#), meets regularly to work on solutions to bring down the greatest barriers to SMEs winning work. And their counterparts in government, the SME Champions, meets to discuss how terms and conditions in contracts can be simplified, payment be prompt, and upcoming contracts communicated to a small business audience

This work reflects a commitment from within government, and from willing entrepreneurs, to work towards government's aspiration of spending £1 in every £3 with SMEs is met by 2022.

There's always more that can be done. That's why in 2018 a key area of focus for the SME team will be in matching government's largest strategic suppliers with small businesses, to jointly fulfil government contracts. We do not want to see the problems that have afflicted SMEs in the Carillion supply chain – far from it. But what we do want to see is greater cooperation between big and small to sort payment terms down the supply chain, and to jointly innovate to deliver the best deal for the taxpayer.

The case of Carillion isn't a warning against outsourcing; it's an opportunity to build stronger relationships in the delivery of public services; between government and auditors, large companies and their suppliers, and SMEs direct with buying departments. The benefits of this will be felt by all.

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