

# Press release: New opportunities for Midlands businesses to deliver UK aid

The Department for International Development (DFID) held its first supplier engagement event today (Friday 3 November 2017) to help local businesses in the Midlands make the most of opportunities to deliver UK aid, following the International Development Secretary Priti Patel's fundamental review of how DFID works with suppliers.

The Minister of State for International Development, Lord Bates, encouraged representatives of over 50 businesses from across the Midlands to compete for DFID business and bring their local expertise and skills to help the poorest people across the world.

By working with DFID, local Midlands businesses will support Global Britain and in turn create jobs for the local economy.

As a result of a review of DFID's work with suppliers, the Department is cutting red tape to boost competition and open up DFID's market to new businesses including small enterprises in the UK and the world's poorest countries. We are also stopping so-called "bid candy" practices, by which large suppliers include smaller businesses to win bids, but then drop them from the contract.

DFID is running regional supplier engagement events – with the first Open for Business event held in collaboration with the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership in Austin Court, Birmingham – to simplify the application process for DFID contracts to help potential suppliers.

Minister of State for International Development, Lord Bates, said:

The Department for International Development is committed to using the world-leading expertise of British businesses to tackle some of the greatest humanitarian and development challenges the world has ever faced.

I have spoken today with business representatives who want to help deliver UK aid to achieve the best results that UK taxpayers and the world's poorest deserve through the unique skills and expertise the Midlands has to offer.

Ensuring that DFID delivers value for money is a cornerstone of the International Development Secretary's agenda – boosting competition and making it easier than ever for new and smaller businesses to work with us through events like this show we are making significant progress.

Saqib Bhatti, Director for Growing Businesses and representing SMEs at

Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), said:

The West Midlands' LEPs are committed to helping the 160,000 companies in our region to compete and thrive. Today is an important step to equipping this area's suppliers with the information they need to bid for new business opportunities across the world.

We look forward to working with DFID to continue the region's strong economic growth.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. In December 2016, the International Development Secretary Priti Patel announced a fundamental review of DFID's management of its contracted suppliers, to ensure greater value for money for taxpayers in the Midlands and across the country. Further information can be [found here](#).
2. This is the first of a number of engagement events DFID will be running across the country, as we want to demystify the process of bidding for work with DFID and help them identify ideas and programmes that they can deliver.
3. The Supplier Review makes it easier than ever for businesses like these to bid to work with us. We have simplified the processes for contract applications which will benefit businesses like those here today.
4. UK aid is untied. Over 80% of DFID's work is delivered through British-registered businesses reflecting the expertise and international competitiveness of the UK marketplace.
5. As a demonstration of the important work DFID has been undertaking in recent months, the Department has been awarded the 2017 Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) Annual Award for 'Best Contribution to the Reputation of the Procurement Profession'.