

Registration

There are no registration requirements with the World Bank for service contractors and equipment suppliers. Consulting firms, however, can register their organization with the World Bank's DACON Information Center. Although not mandatory, the IFIs and the borrowing countries may occasionally refer to DACON, but rarely use it to actually source consultants. Its primary purpose is to seek or confirm information about a particular firm. DACON registration forms are available directly from the Bank or from the IFI Liaison Office at the Canadian Embassy in Washington.

The World Bank also maintains a separate register of *individual* consultants with particular expertise in a wide range of fields (ie: electrical engineers, agricultural specialists, etc.). The Bank occasionally hires experts for short-term assignments, usually in the field, to supplement its own in-house expertise. "Forms for Registration of Individual Consultants" can be obtained from either the Bank or the Canadian Embassy. As with the DACON system, however, the roster is more a formality and is rarely used to actually source consultants.

Pursuit of World Bank Procurement Opportunities

Consultants and suppliers of goods and services to projects funded by the World Bank need to be aware that the World Bank is a lending agency and not a procurement agency. Accordingly, marketing activities should be primarily directed at the country which has borrowed the funds, and not at the World Bank.

At any given time, hundreds of projects are at various stages in about 100 countries around the world. Hence it is important that, at the outset, companies seeking World Bank business determine realistic marketing objectives and appropriate strategies -- bearing in mind the

international competition, as well as the company's resources, experience and competitive advantage.

Companies should, however, still make contact with World Bank personnel in Washington, as this is where important early information can be obtained on the scope, size, timing and requirements of the projects. Furthermore, although bank staff usually do not get involved in the actual tendering and selection, they may still play an instrumental role in an unofficial advisory capacity to the borrowing country who may be unfamiliar with foreign expertise, goods or services required.

A general rule of thumb is to direct approximately 10 percent of the marketing initiative at the Washington level in order to gather and update essential project intelligence, and about 90 percent of the effort in the country where the project is to be executed.

The Canadian Embassy can help companies establish contacts at the Washington level and Canadian trade commissioners in other embassies around the world will be able to assist on the local scene.

Marketing Strategy

Before embarking on a World Bank marketing initiative, an appropriate strategy should be designed. This includes determining what human and financial resources are available, both within and outside the firm, and which specific geographic markets to target. This will normally imply determining and earmarking manpower and budgets, as well as selecting those products, services and expertise which offer the most distinct competitive advantages. The marketing should be geographically focused at those targets where there is both potential and where human and financial resources can be reasonably allocated.

Because of the long life cycle of a World Bank-funded project (usually two to four years from

identification to execution) companies pursuing World Bank procurement must be willing to dedicate sufficient financial and human resources to follow the marketing initiative through to the end.

It is important to be selective when first approaching the World Bank market; competition is intense and there is a risk of wasting time and money if a solid base is not well established first. With knowledge and experience in specific areas however, this base can easily be expanded and greater opportunities pursued.

In summary:

- Select a narrow range of products or services.
- Establish an appropriate geographical target.
- Allocate sufficient manpower and financial resources.

After designing an appropriate marketing strategy, companies should be prepared to take the following steps in the pursuit of World Bank-funded business opportunities:

▶ **Identify projects** of interest in publications such as Development Business and the "Monthly Operational Summary", or through personal contacts established.

▶ **Assess business potential** of the project by obtaining additional information from the executing agency of the project and from project staff in Washington. The IFI liaison office at the Canadian Embassy in Washington can provide assistance and guidance in this process.

▶ **Contact the executing agency** of the project in the borrowing country to express interest in qualifying for a project. Concurrently, seek advice and assistance from the Canadian trade commissioner in the borrowing country.

▶ **Visit the executing agency** in the borrowing country. This is important because, again, it is the executing agency that will issue the tenders, evaluate the bids, and award the contract.