

Businesses invited to tender for £12bn worth of HS2 contracts

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- Following the Prime Minister announcing the start of construction on the London-Birmingham route, HS2 has released £12 billion worth of supply chain contracts to be let over the next 18 months
- British businesses actively encouraged to bid for contracts
- 4-day virtual event starting today will showcase the plethora of opportunities available and advise businesses on how to get 'contract ready'

HS2 Ltd, the company delivering Britain's new high speed railway, is today (23rd November) kicking off a four-day event that will showcase many of the £12bn worth of contract opportunities that businesses from across the UK can find out how to prepare and start bidding for.

The event will give businesses, across hundreds of sectors, a crucial insight into how they can become part of HS2's rapidly growing supply chain, which already includes over 2,000 businesses.

Companies right across the country have registered to attend the virtual 'Meet the Contractor' event to find out more about the estimated 400,000 supply chain opportunities that will emerge over the next 18 months, and how they can get 'HS2 ready'. Over 2,000 people have registered to take part, securing over 21,000 virtual seats. 78% of registrations are from SMEs, spanning a range of business specialisms including logistics, electrical engineering, fencing and accommodation providers.

The four-day programme is being delivered in partnership with HS2's four main works construction partners (Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV)); Eiffage, Kier, Ferrovial, BAM Nutall (EKFB)); Align and Skanska Costain STRABAG (SCS)) and two stations contractors (Balfour Beatty/VINCI/SYSTRA and Mace/Dragados), who between them will unlock thousands of individual work packages which range in size and value between £5,000 and £200m.

The agenda for the first three days consists of 24 opt-in webinars, delivered by over 60 presenters, which allow delegates to learn about the HS2 scheme, HS2 Ltd's procurement processes and the programme of works its contractors are undertaking. Monday's session begins with an introduction from HS2 Minister, Andrew Stephenson MP.

The final day presents the opportunity for over 1,000 potential suppliers to meet one-to-one with HS2's construction partners, who are looking for new entrants into their supply chain to deliver their 2021/22 work packages.

The potential contracts represent a huge boost for British businesses seeking security and growth amidst the economic uncertainty arising from the Coronavirus pandemic. HS2 Ltd has so far awarded 98% of its current contracts to UK-based businesses; 70% of which have gone to SMEs, and it aims to continue that positive trend through direct engagement with suppliers and local business during the Meet the Contractor event.

HS2 Minister Andrew Stephenson said: "HS2 is at the heart of our plans to build back better from Covid-19 by firing up economic growth and creating tens of thousands of skilled jobs right across the country.

"This marks a very important moment for this project as it opens up £12 billion worth of supply chain contracts, creating immediate opportunities and providing certainty for British businesses when they need it most."

The £12bn boost reflects the scale of progress to date in delivering HS2's Phase One programme between London and Birmingham, as work on the tunnels, viaducts and station foundations along the 140-mile route gathers pace.

Mark Thurston, HS2 Ltd's CEO said: "The Government has said that construction must continue during the lockdown, and for HS2 that means continuing to bring more and more companies onto the project, creating thousands of jobs across Britain.

"This event will unlock billions of pounds worth of new contract opportunities on HS2, providing thousands of businesses and their employees with guaranteed incomes, and helping the country's economic recovery in these uncertain times."