



Cabinet Office

Procurement Policy Note – The Consultancy Playbook Version 1.1

Action Note PPN 02/22

September 2022

Issue

1. The Consultancy Playbook was originally published in May 2021. It focused on getting consultancy engagements right at the start whilst ensuring HMG uses consultants in the right instances to solve sector specific problems, avoiding over reliance on external support, and capturing knowledge and learnings.
2. Government committed to update playbooks annually in order to embed learnings into implementation programmes and drive continuous improvement. Version 1.1 of the Consultancy Playbook is a light touch refresh that maintains focus on the original three chapters to strengthen current guidance and further support implementation.
3. As part of this refresh, government is launching a supporting Guidance Note on Knowledge and skills to accompany V1.1 of the Playbook. As part of this update there is now an expectation that all consultancy assignments will generate knowledge, and transfer knowledge and skills across government, through the Government Consulting Hub (GCH) Knowledge Exchange Platform.

Dissemination and Scope

4. The contents of this PPN apply to all Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies. Together these are referred to as 'In-scope Organisations'. The Devolved Administrations and NHS organisations are not in scope of this PPN.
5. The Consultancy Playbook V1.1 and associated guidance are considered good practice and other public bodies should consider taking them into account. Please circulate this PPN within your organisation, drawing it to the attention of those with a commercial and procurement role.

Timing

6. The provisions of this Procurement Policy Note should be applied with immediate effect.

Action

7. In-scope Organisations should take action to apply the principles, rules and guidelines set out in the Consultancy Playbook V1.1. This update builds on the previous iteration of the

Consultancy Playbook and improves how public bodies deliver consultancy services with the private sector through:

- targeted, iterative updates to the Playbook across six key areas: knowledge and skills; delivery models; SME access; IR35; roles and responsibilities; going to market; and
- a new guidance note on knowledge and skills, which provides detailed guidance for departments on how to incorporate knowledge generation, knowledge and skills transfer, and sharing across the contract lifecycle, with the widest possible HMG use.

Background

8. The Consultancy Playbook was originally launched in May 2021. The Consultancy Playbook Version 1.1 supersedes that document. Its application will further improve how central government commissions and engages with consultants, achieving better outcomes, better value for money and supporting Civil Service capability through the creation of knowledge and skills.

9. The Consultancy Playbook is one of four Playbooks designed to improve the way in which the government assesses, procures and manages contracts to increase value for money and deliver better outcomes. Version 1.1 of the Consultancy Playbook joins the Sourcing Playbook, Digital Data and Technology Playbook, and the recently published Version 1.1 of the Construction Playbook.

Contact

10. Enquiries about this PPN should be directed to the Crown Commercial Service Helpdesk on 0345 410 2222 or info@crowncommercial.gov.uk

11. The Government Consulting Hub can be contacted at governmentconsultinghub@cabinetoffice.gov.uk