



## The Art of the Tender ... [US = bits]

is about as daunting as the ART OF THE FUGUE. Yet the portion of Steingraeber's sales to public or semi-public institutions ranges from 25 to 50 percent, depending on the year. Nearly all of these sales are subject to calls for tender that either take place

- internationally
  - nationally
  - regionally
- and sometimes not publically at all!

We learn about them from official notices in newspapers. Since it's impossible to find all of them, there are **agencies** that exist for this purpose. You can order information from them, information that is provided "automatically" on a daily basis. In Europe, these agencies are TED ([www.ted.europa.eu](http://www.ted.europa.eu)) and <http://simap.europa.eu>.

We work through the aforementioned portals. If we receive a call for tender that falls within your territory, **we reach agreement with you** as to whether you or the Steingraeber firm will provide a bid proposal. This can differ from one call for tender to another.

For you, however, the most important platforms are regional and national. It's best to inquire at your **regional chamber of commerce**.

### Step One: Log onto the appropriate platform(s) using suitable search terms

The **calibre of your search terms** is crucial for a successful outcome!

Please organise your search category along the broadest possible lines. You should not only search for calls for tender under "uprights, grand pianos or pianos", but also under "musical instruments" or name brands like *Steinway* and *Yamaha*. Public building projects must also be included in your search criteria: You should not limit your search to **civic centres, concert halls, conference centres, community halls, schools, and new construction, etc.**, but should also look under "reconstruction, alteration, modernisation, renovation ..."

This list is by NO means complete: Accessories like "concert benches, adjustable piano benches and instrument covers ..." also belong on it!

Here are a few figures:

All investments at or above the EU threshold of € 200,000.00 must be advertised internationally. National laws apply to amounts below € 200,000.00, and purchases below € 100,000.00 are often advertised as restricted.

### Step Two: Use other sources of information

Restricted calls for tender or projects "without any notification" are the hardest to get hold of, yet are often the crucial ones!

You will learn about them in **daily newspapers, music journals, and private conversations, etc.**

### Step Three: Make sure that they have YOU in mind . . .

and that you find calls for tender in the mail unsolicitedly. Expanding your **client mailing list** is a good means to this end: You should include all *architectural firms, planning and structural engineering offices, interior designers, and interior design centres* in your region.

**"Friends of" and advocacy organisations, theatrical societies, concert associations, etc.**, sponsor projects and are in the know, so it's a good idea to join them. (You will then receive member address lists and basic information about their purchases.)

Your company brochure and website should indicate that, **even BEFORE the call for tender**, you are **available for consultation** during the complete design and furnishing process. Topics include air conditioning, humidification, acoustics, infrastructure (door widths, room to manoeuvre for delivery, etc.).

You will find our consulting checklist in the attachment.

### The early bird ...

Decisions are frequently based not on price or quality, but on the wording of the call for tender, sometimes against the purchaser's will. If you have an opportunity to influence how the call for tender is worded, make sure it is an **open and broad-based call for tender (in Germany, one that accords with VOL and not with VOB)**.

The situation becomes difficult if "general contractor", "restricted tender" or "en bloc purchase" are listed as a condition in the call for tender. In that case, the only winners are mainly market leaders, large music companies, or even non-industry general contractors (such as those that the U.S. Army engages as a rule).

Here's one example from 2011: We supplied a large new hall in Scandinavia with four grand pianos - Two professors from the music academy ... travelled throughout Europe and decided on one Fazioli, two Steinways, and one Steingraeber. The building authority wrote on the call for tender: **ONLY ONE SUPPLIER** is allowed! The local dealer delivered three Steinways and one Yamaha ...

### Handling a call for tender

When the envelope containing the call for tender arrives, you may immediately feel discouraged because it is often 100 pages long!

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Rule No. 1 | Read EVERY DETAIL anyway, because it cites all of the important criteria.<br>A single error and you're out!  |
| Rule No. 2 | Be sure to mark it immediately on first reading (originals in pencil and printouts with a highlighter): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What deadlines must you observe?</li><li>- What procedure was chosen?</li><li>- What proof must you furnish?</li></ul> |

And what do you do if certain portions of text are unclear?

This is where

Rule No. 3 comes into play: **NEVER** interpret ANY part of the text!  
**ALWAYS** inquire, generally this is only possible in writing within a certain period. The inquiries of all bidders with all answers are published then.

Rule No. 4                      You should request official confirmation (certificate of good conduct, certificate for tax purposes ...) on the very first day.

**A checklist for submitting tenders is enclosed.**

### **If a call for tender targets a brand**

The text of a call for tender is often taken from the catalogues of the market leaders, Steinway and Yamaha. The two of them are sometimes expressly named as the preferred brands, along with the proviso that "alternative brands are allowed." Problems such as this then show up in a whole series of questions:

In pursuit of a composite, Classical period sound, Steingraeber has chosen to follow different principles:

#### Duplex scaling

"Duplex" aliquots for the treble strings enrich the fundamentals with additional overtones. This is controlled by means of front and rear duplex string segments of equal length for every interval at the fourth, fifth, and octave.

Speaking front and rear hitch pin strings are also found in Steingraeber products. But Steingraeber employs the **principle of blended sound** by increasing string lengths at the rear duplex string segment. As a result, Steingraeber's treble strings generate a larger number of overtones without focusing on perfect intervals (i.e., fourths and fifths). As a result, slight beats create color while avoiding troublesome discrepancies (interval shifts that can also come about and often show up in older instruments with *duplex scaling*).

There is also **the unique Steingraeber "sound bridge principle"** at the capo d'astro bar. In C-212, D-232, and E-272 models, little bridges between the treble string groups connect the capo d'astro bar to the area of the front, non-speaking string lengths. This increases the energy supply in the strings and increases the dynamic range!

#### Sound "bell"

This principle of specially hardened cast-iron at the rim in the treble uses a metal nose bolt to increase the inner tension ("tilt") to begin with and the curvature tension of the soundboard thereafter. Over the years, the curvature of the soundboard can be stabilized with an adjusting screw. This *inner tension* is built into all of our models at Steingraeber, albeit in a different way using interlocking braces.

Steingraeber generates the necessary force by using a interlocking braces at each location where other manufacturers employ what people call a "bell" and corresponding *pulsator* (a wooden post to control the curvature of the soundboard). Both methods augment the posts and bell by means of an adjusting screw at the frame. But in Steingraeber grands, the adjustment screw relates to the bridge pressure and not the tilt tension.

**Steingraeber Dealer Meeting June 2013, lecture Udo Steingraeber**

Steingraeber D-232 and E-272 concert grands have an **additional nose bolt with a connecting screw in the treble** that converts string tension into pressure and transfers it downward via the frame to the belly rail against the treble interlocking braces behind it! In terms of piano making, *nose bolts* at the bridge to the bass are typical of all grand pianos; but the second type of nose bolt is only used by Steingraeber at present. This additional "power nose" sits underneath the frame between treble sections one and two.

Even in drier climates over many decades, **the enormous curvature stability of Steingraeber soundboards is considered a given among restorers.** Old Steingraeber pianos dating back to the nineteenth century bear witness to this fact. The reason for this lies in the classic dimensions of the sounding surfaces. This has to do with the size of early grands because, up to the mid-nineteenth century, string lengths in the treble simply could not be increased! And so comparing the top notes of a 940 cm<sup>2</sup> Steinway D-274 with those of a 680 cm<sup>2</sup> Steingraeber E-272 yields very surprising results.

### **Last but not least**

Today we have provided basic information and cited examples. If you encounter other oddities, unusual issues or new requirements, we are at your service and will respond with our recommendations.

Irene Fleischmann is Steingraeber's representative for calls for tender:

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She has a wealth of experience and is always available to answer your questions.

**Viel Erfolg !**

**Lots of luck !!**

**Bon courage !!!**



Wir stehen Unternehmen zur Seite



# Public procurement Checklist for successful tendering

## At the beginning and during the procedure

- Check tender documents and the mentioned attachments for completeness. This verification has to be done without any delay. Missing documents have to be requested immediately.
- Read tender documents thoroughly.
- Decide if your company can/wants to submit an offer.
- If you have questions, ask them immediately. Questions might arise in case of ambiguities, misleading formulations, contradictions e.g. between the tender notice and the tender documents.  
Make sure you choose the right addressee (indicated in the tender). Questions should be formulated in a clear and precise way, if possible offer solutions. Pay attention to the form. How are the questions to be asked (by mail, telefax)?
- Tender notice and tender documents need to be checked for compliance with public procurement law. Especially in the case of tenders that are above the EU-thresholds (so called Europe-wide tenders) you have to respect deadlines for complaints. In case of infringements and if the contracting authority doesn't rectify: notify the claim immediately – not later than the expiration day of the tender deadline.

## Deadline planning

- Create a timetable for the following deadlines:
- Request tender documents until \_\_\_\_\_
- Deadline for request of participation \_\_\_\_\_
- Latest date to ask questions \_\_\_\_\_
- If needed: provide sample products until \_\_\_\_\_
- Deadline (day, time) to hand in bid \_\_\_\_\_
- (If required in the procedure) presentation date \_\_\_\_\_
- Time of awarding** / end of validity \_\_\_\_\_
- Delivery deadline/Execution time** \_\_\_\_\_

## Organisational planning

- Allocation of tasks in the company, rough planning.
- Fulfillment of tasks and delivery to in-house coordinator (name) \_\_\_\_\_ until (deadline) \_\_\_\_\_.
- In case of subcontractors: Subcontractor declaration (name) \_\_\_\_\_ until (deadline) \_\_\_\_\_.
- How will you submit the bid and who is responsible (name) \_\_\_\_\_.
- Deadline for submitting the bid by \_\_\_\_\_ at the latest \_\_\_\_\_.
- Personal submitting by \_\_\_\_\_ at the latest \_\_\_\_\_.
- Can the suppliers meet the deadlines.?
- Is it possible to hold prices stable during the requested period of validity?

## Proofs of suitability and certificates

- Create a list with all the required proofs of suitability and certificates.
- Are you registered in the pre-qualification register? (VOL: [www.pq-vol.de](http://www.pq-vol.de) or VOB: [www.pq-verein.de](http://www.pq-verein.de))

**Note:** The following list varies according to the specific tender

- Tax clearance certificate from the tax authority
- Certification from the health insurance company regarding gapless contributions
- Certification from the professional association regarding gapless contributions
- Information from the central register of companies (Gewerbezentralregister) alternatively: self-declaration, that no grave misconduct exists
- Certificate from the commercial register
- Business registration or change of registration, if needed business license
- Certificate of membership from the Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Chamber of Crafts
- Certificate of a business liability insurance/professional liability insurance
- Proof of professional qualification
- A company self-declaration that an insolvency proceeding has neither started nor been proposed or that such a proceeding has not been rejected due to a lack of insolvency assets. Self-declaration that the company is not currently in liquidation
- Company profile regarding the technical equipment
- Reference list of previous clients (with invoice value, time of performance and the public or private contracting authority)
- Self-declaration of the total turnover/the turnover regarding the services or goods to be procured
- Self-declaration on the number of employees.

**Note:** Attention must be paid on the form in which the certificates are demanded by the contracting authority (original, copy, self-declaration) and how up to date these certificates have to be.

### Detailed information on the company:

VAT identification number (USt-IdNr.): \_\_\_\_\_

Tax number: \_\_\_\_\_

Responsible tax office: \_\_\_\_\_

Commercial register number: \_\_\_\_\_

Register court: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance association: \_\_\_\_\_

### Before submitting your offer – Check compliance with the formal requirements

- Use original copies and forms provided by the contracting authority.
- The cover letter shall not include your general terms and conditions (GTC) or other conditions.
- Forms need to be filled in completely, forms that need no further completion may have to be sent back as well.
- All requested price indications (in Euro) need to be filled in, no mixed calculation.
- Do not change/add something to the conditions of tender (e.g. cancellation, comments and not requested entries).
- Your own errors in the offer need to be crossed out clearly, corrected, signed and dated.
- Enclose all attachments (proof of suitability, certificates).  
**Note:** Not in all cases missing documents and declarations can be handed in later.
- Submit all declarations.
- No references to:
  - Your own general terms and conditions (GTC)
  - Your own delivery and payment terms
  - Place of jurisdiction
  - From the tender deviating warranty conditions
  - Liability limitation.
- Do not enclose further, not requested documents.
- Dispatch of the offer: Stick precisely to the guidelines mentioned in the tender documents (in general use the double closed envelope system, mark it as an offer to a tender), pay special attention to use the correct address
- Provide your signature in the right places (in general on the proposal form), date and stamp it; in e-procurement procedures make use of the required electronic signature.
- If approved: Hand in variant solutions (alternative tenders) on a separate document that has to be labeled as such. In the case of variant solutions, their equivalency has to be proved beyond doubt by appropriate documents/records.

## Testing steps before submitting your offer – Compliance with the contextual requirements

- Check your offer for the accuracy of calculations and factual information.
- The offered price has been calculated sufficiently.  
**Note:** The contracting authority can demand insight on the calculation of the price.
- No participation as an individual bidder and on the same time as a member of a bidder consortium in the same tender.
- No handing in of variant solutions if not explicitly permitted.
- Indicate all subcontractors.
- Logical and comprehensible structure of the offer (provided that the contracting authority hasn't provided a structure). Table of contents. If necessary use binders.
- Create a copy of the whole offer for your own records.

**Note:** The checklist is just a sample and it should help minimize the risk of your offer being excluded. It does not claim to be complete. Depending on the underlying public procurement law and the individual requirements of the contracting authority, there can be the need for fewer, more or different certificates in the individual case.

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## **Checklist for Concert Halls** to offer concert grand pianos in all sizes

### **1. concert hall:**

- Are there any plans, and if so, are copies available? yes  no
- Regular capacity ..... seats
- Area ..... qm
- Ceiling height ..... m
- How many chairs can be provided? ..... chairs
- Chairs:            1.Strongly cushioned?
- 2.Slightly cushioned?
- 3.Not cushioned?
- Time of reverberation (please check by clapping hands at several places of the hall) ca. .... sec.
- Is there a pedestal? yes  no
- Height of the pedestal? ..... m?
- Access to the pedestal necessary? (or does the piano remain there?) yes  no
- Is the removal free of barriers? yes  no
- Is there a door with a width of at least 165 cm? (For delivery and removal) yes  no
- Is there a safety bag/box for the piano? yes  no
- Is it possible to create a separate humid atmosphere? yes  no

### **2. Details of usage:**

Which pianos have been used recently? Brand ..... Type (Lenght) .....

How is the instrumentation, are there only solo concerts or also concerts with an orchestra?

- 
- Will there be concerts for 2 pianos? yes  no
- What is the type of the music? (e.g. classical, modern...) .....
- Does the piano need a Midi connection? yes  no
- Might a black, matt grand piano be taken into consideration? yes  no
- Which illumination is needed?
- Is the keyboard completely lighted (no shadows on the keys)? yes  no
- If not, is it possible to install a proper light? yes  no
- Does the grand piano need 1.breaks or 2.normal castors? <sup>1</sup>:    <sup>2</sup>:

### **3. Selection:**

- Is there a jury that renders decisions on the record or based on auditions? yes  no
- To which persons can audio samples and documents be sent? (List subsequent)
- In case of a reconstruction, is a free meeting with  
the architect requested? yes  no