

## FAQ - Frequently asked questions

### Registration

#### I am not a supplier yet, how do I proceed?

To participate in tenders based on the qualification system for consultant services, please first register in the SMaRT supplier portal <https://smart.noncd.db.de/>

Detailed instructions can be found here: [Supplier registration](#)

Suppliers submit their application for prequalification when registering in SMaRT.

### Applying

#### I am already registered in SMaRT - what is the difference between “Suitability granted” and “Prequalified”?

Suitability means that you have been classified as a suitable supplier by Procurement. This classification is generally issued after services have been performed. Prequalification is an additional qualification that gives you the opportunity to participate in EU competitions according to Section 48 of the Rules on Awarding Contracts in Transport, Drinking Water Supply and Energy Supply (SektVO).

#### I am logged into SMaRT but am unable to find the application form

Click on the DB logo in the top bar of the supplier overview after logging in to access the application form.

#### What is the difference between a broker and a consulting firm?

In principle, a broker does not provide its own consulting services, but purchases consulting services on the market to resell them. By contrast, a consulting firm primarily employs employees subject to social insurance contributions to provide consulting services. For further details, please refer to the procedural rules for PQ, which can be found in the [Deutsche Bahn AG Supplier Portal](#).

#### When is my PQ complete and therefore valid?

Once all application documents have been fully completed and provided references have been successfully validated. The application documents also include a questionnaire and the collection of rate cards (non-binding standard quotation prices).

#### Can I continue with an application I have previously started at a later date?

Yes, you can revisit an incomplete application at any time. However, the PQ application is not considered complete and submitted until all required information is received.

#### How much time does it take to submit an application?

An application may cover a variety of specialist disciplines (product categories). Each discipline requires proof of your expertise, which means, among other things, providing and checking references. Therefore, be sure to take a critical look at many specialist disciplines/product categories you actually meet the suitability criteria for and select the product categories that are most relevant to you.

### References

#### What do I need to keep in mind for my reference customers?

Please provide a name for each reference customer. If necessary, list the name of a person authorized to represent the company/head of department, as contact persons in higher management functions in particular are generally not available or only available to a very

limited extent. Please make sure that the name of a representative is also indicated as the contact person in the respective reference.

Please note that internal references cannot be used.

A reference can only be considered a reference if the consulting service was performed for another company with its own legal identity. SMaRT checks at the time of registration whether the requirements are met and will inform you accordingly.

I would like to use references (as a consulting firm) with a volume below EUR 250,000. Is this possible and does it offer any benefits?

The SMaRT system permits references starting at EUR 100,000. However, this only applies if you apply as a broker. When applying as a consulting firm, these references have no bearing on the granting of PQ in a product category.

Can I use ongoing orders, e.g. framework agreements, as references?

Provided that projects or commissions that have not yet been completed can be split into definable phases and that these meet the minimum criteria in each case (e.g. at least EUR 250,000 (net) for a consulting firm), this is acceptable.

How can I speed up my process?

Reference collection is the aspect that takes the most time when completing your application. We recommend preparing descriptions for each reference in advance in order to then e.g. file and submit them in one run.

Can I use a reference more than once?

The same reference cannot be used more than once. Please make sure the reference descriptions for the individual references clearly and unambiguously differ and describe the project comprehensively (i.e. several keywords/sentences per reference). Duplicates are generally not accepted.

What does "Cancel submission" mean when collecting references?

References can first be created and saved before finally being submitted for a detailed audit. If a reference has not yet been submitted, it can be cancelled. This deletes the previous entries and a new entry is possible.

## **Support**

Who should I contact if I have technical questions on operating the SMaRT system?

Please contact [smart.support@deutschebahn.com](mailto:smart.support@deutschebahn.com)

Who should I contact if I have non-technical questions about the PQ application?

If you have any non-system-related questions regarding PQ, please feel free to contact us at any time at the email address [pq-beraterleistungen@deutschebahn.com](mailto:pq-beraterleistungen@deutschebahn.com) or you can ask questions about your respective application directly in SMaRT (comment function).