

PITCHING CODE OF CONDUCT

AS A CLIENT WE WILL...

Only pitch when we have a genuine requirement for agency support and internal stakeholder commitment to the programme in terms of funding and feasibility.

Share the reasoning behind why the work is being put out to tender with the pitching agency.

If relevant, consult the incumbent agency before briefing other agencies.

Ensure the pitch process is fair, that work will definitely be awarded and will start within a reasonable timescale.

Prepare a thorough written brief, pre-approved and aligned with all internal stakeholders.

Share relevant aspects of the company/product business plan and any market research or insights, once a NDA is signed.

Involve all key stakeholders in the cross functional team and provide equal access from the outset including procurement, commercial and communications, market access, medical affairs and policy, as appropriate. Although all this interaction may be coordinated through a single main point of contact.

Ringfence appropriate time for agencies to discuss privately aspects that are specific to their proposed strategy and programme i.e. not in front of the other agencies pitching.

Ensure agency access to the most senior decision maker pre-pitch and their attendance at the pitch.

Where possible, provide a choice of pitch dates.

- Avoid key holiday periods for pitch preparation, e.g. Christmas

Provide adequate time to prepare for the size of the work to be pitched (minimum three weeks brief to pitch or early submission).

Provide and adhere to a clear timeline of events.

Limit the number of agencies pitching to no more than four.

Explain the criteria that agencies will be assessed against and share this in advance.

Ensure everyone's time is put to best use by exploring parameters that could be 'deal-breakers' in advance of the pitch.

Give a clear indication of the programme size and scope, budgetary parameters, and indicative overall budget.

Ensure the following at pitch:

- presence of key internal decision-makers
- consistency in attendees (to ensure fairness)
- consistency in scoring (use scoring sheet)
- participants are fully engaged i.e. not on their phones/computers

Respect intellectual property rights of ideas and creativity from pitching agencies and do not use or share those of non-appointed agencies.

Set a provisional date by which a final decision will be made (max 2 weeks after the pitch).

Provide comprehensive and constructive feedback to both pitch winners and losers within a timely period.

AND EXPECT OUR AGENCIES TO...

Respect the confidentiality of the pitch process.

Prepare thoughtful questions, interrogating the brief thoroughly and commit the time to speak to or meet the client team to clarify the brief and ask questions.

Fully take part in any pre-pitch selection criteria such as chemistry meetings and procurement discussions, with openness and honesty.

Decline to pitch if:

- there is a conflict of interest
- they cannot devote the appropriate time or dedicated account team to the pitch
- they are unable to meet the requirements of the brief
- they lack the required expertise/knowledge

Engage with all key stakeholders from the outset of the process and set a main point of contact.

Ensure ideas are in line with the brief provided and the thinking of the decision-makers on the client side.

Provide fresh creative / innovative ideas that effectively meet the specific brief.

Ensure objectives are SMART and strategies clearly relate to objectives.

Propose evaluation methodology and criteria.

Only deliver proposals that are compliant with regulatory and relevant codes of practice requirements.

Commit to present proposals that come within the budget where one is given.

Provide billing rates and indicative programme costs.

Ensure that the pitch team, as far as possible, represents the actual team that will be working day-to-day on the account.

Ensure that any senior presence at the pitch will be reflective of their continued involvement, and indicative budget provided, if awarded the business.

Be constructive and open minded in receiving feedback following the pitch decision.