



Invitation to Tender – Official Playing Equipment Supplier

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Introduction

[BaseballSoftballUK](#), the national development agency for baseball and softball in the United Kingdom, is seeking to identify and appoint an ‘Official Personal Equipment Supplier’ for baseball and softball customers in the UK, as well as for our own products and services.

Background

Since 2000, BaseballSoftballUK has provided services to the sports' governing bodies with the aim of developing and increasing levels of participation, skill and achievement in UK baseball and softball. Established as a not-for-profit organisation, BaseballSoftballUK is committed to developing the reach and participation levels in baseball and softball and all monies raised are re-invested into achieving these aims, as well as reducing reliance on our primary funding partner, Sport England.

Baseball and softball together are two of the fastest growing sports in the UK. There are currently 26,200 registered participants playing the sports each year in organised leagues. There are over 1,100 teams playing regularly through the summer, as well as indoor winter softball increasingly played.

The playing population is well represented by a large number of children, undergraduates, businesses, women and the LGBTQ+ community, and BaseballSoftballUK actively promotes the sports in schools, universities, talent academies and corporations nationally.

In August 2020, BaseballSoftballUK announced a new, four-year rolling strategy focused on combining the resources of baseball and softball into one shared development goal – Two Sports, One Ambition. As part of this endeavour, the Development Charter was launched, allowing any baseball or softball club in the United Kingdom to access BaseballSoftballUK’s resources, expertise, and services for free, with the one requirement that clubs follow BSUK’s safeguarding policy.

BaseballSoftballUK’s **ambition** is that baseball/softball is to be played **in more places, by more people** and has as its **mission** to increase participation in baseball and softball in the UK to 34,000 players by 2024 by:

- Targeted participation growth
- Talent development
- Efficient grassroots support services
- Organizational sustainability

Value of the Partnership

There are a number of benefits of being the ‘Official Equipment Supplier’ for BaseballSoftballUK:

- Recognition as the ‘Official Playing Equipment Supplier’
- Recognition as BaseballSoftballUK’s youth talent training programmes: ‘[Official Partner of the BaseballSoftballUK Academy](#)’ and the ‘[BaseballSoftballUK High Performance Academy](#)’

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- Use of relevant BaseballSoftballUK logos and imagery
 - Regular promotion through BaseballSoftballUK extensive digital channels:
 - [BaseballSoftballUK website](#) and [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#)
 - Access to [Farnham Park Baseball and Softball Complex](#), BaseballSoftballUK's national facility
 - Outdoor advertising space
 - Retail and storage space: event-based or long term, order processing
 - Promotion on [Farnham Park Baseball and Softball Complex website](#) and [Facebook](#)

Market Valuation

BaseballSoftballUK estimates the size and scale of playing equipment for baseball/softball in the UK to be in excess of £708,000 per annum.

The analysis incorporates 29 potential items of playing equipment covering both the Non-BaseballSoftballUK and BaseballSoftballUK range. The analysis is based on current, published data of 26,200 registered baseball/softball players in the UK spending an average of £27.15 per person on sports equipment in 2020ⁱ.

Equipment quantity, lifespan, an average of 17 players per team and average retail prices have been estimated, generating a market value per annum.

We believe the sports' year-on-year growth figure presents a tangible opportunity for the Official Supplier's business to grow in tandem: with every new participant comes a new set of playing equipment needs.

Customer Segmentation

Customer groups can be categorised into 'Non-BaseballSoftballUK (External)' and 'BaseballSoftballUK (Internal)' as follows:

Non-BaseballSoftballUK (External)

- Leagues
- Clubs
- Teams
- Individual players
- Schools
- National teams

BaseballSoftballUK (Internal)

- Academy Baseball and Academy Softball equipment
- High Performance Academy equipment
- Slowpitch Softball Academy equipment
- Hit the Pitch equipment
- Bespoke event needs

Playing Equipment Segmentation

Playing equipment can be categorised as follows:

- Bats
 - Youth baseball bats
 - Youth softball bats
 - Adult slowpitch softball bats
 - Adult baseball bats (wooden and metal)
 - Adult fastpitch softball bats
 - Fungo and training bats
- Gloves, including:
 - Catcher gloves
 - First base gloves (left and right-handed)
 - Left and right-handed fielders' gloves
- Catcher Equipment, including:
 - Shin protectors
 - Knee savers
 - Masks
 - Chest protectors
- Training items, including:
 - Batting Tees
 - Nets
 - Hitting/Swing trainers
 - Baseball and softball specific weights (i.e., donut bat weight)
 - Radar guns
- Accessories, including:
 - Wrist and arm braces
 - Batting gloves
 - Bat bags
 - Eye black
 - Rosin
 - Pine Tar
 - Batting Helmets
- Cleats
 - Field turf shoes

Requirements for both customer groups will span adult and youth ages and size and all genders, and the above lists are not exhaustive.

BaseballSoftballUK is now looking for a reliable partner to meet the needs across both customer groups, offering a wide choice of appropriate, age specific, competitively priced and high-quality playing equipment.

We anticipate that the chosen partner will recognise the value of a partnership with BaseballSoftballUK and a visible opportunity to support two growing and emerging sports.

Constraints of the Partnership

Whilst BaseballSoftballUK has well established customer and audience groups for whom providing access to a range of good quality, affordable equipment remains a strategic priority, we cannot guarantee the non-BaseballSoftballUK orders that will be placed. It is largely dependent upon a proactive marketing plan committed to by the appointed supplier and BaseballSoftballUK. We can also not guarantee that BSUK orders will be placed with the Official Supplier should delivery timescales, costs or any other part of the brief not be met. We will accept no responsibility for lower than predicted sales returns.

Submission of Tender

This brief invites to tender organisations that have the necessary skills, expertise, knowledge and capacity to supply personal playing equipment to the baseball and softball community in the UK.

Tender

Organisations are requested in their tender submission to provide the following information about the proposed playing equipment for both non-BaseballSoftballUK and BaseballSoftballUK orders:

- Manufacturer/s.
- Order and fulfillment process.
- Fulfilment timescales.
- Suggested selling prices.
- Reliability and quality.
- Proposed manufacturers will be reviewed against the Modern Slavery Act.
- Provide details of remedial/escalation plans to make good any deficiencies in the wearable kit.
- Provide a dedicated account/relationship manager who will work with BaseballSoftballUK to fulfil Non-BaseballSoftballUK and BaseballSoftballUK orders throughout the lifetime of the contract.
- Share two customer testimonials within the tender submission.
- Make known any declaration of interest within the tender.

Assessment Criteria

Tenders will be assessed against three criteria:

1 Product Specification – 20%

The playing equipment offered must meet the needs of Non-BaseballSoftballUK and BaseballSoftballUK orders. Specifications of playing equipment proposed will be assessed for suitability.

2 Service Specifications – 30%

Your service undertakings will be assessed, including customer service, design capabilities, ordering process and fulfilment and general ease of doing business with. Specifically, we are interested in evidence of commitment, capacity and capability to meet 2-3 week turnarounds for all orders; the provision of online ordering/shop, with a shop for each team or programme; fulfilment for single item orders.

3 Cost at Point of Sale – 20%

The selling price and perceived value to non-BaseballSoftballUK and BaseballSoftballUK customers will be considered.

4 Return to the Sports – 30%

Specifically, the financial payments being made to BaseballSoftballUK as a part of this deal.

BaseballSoftballUK is keen to understand from interested suppliers how they envisage using their appointment as 'Official Playing Equipment Supplier' to help the sports more widely through promotional, vocational or other activity.

Terms

The successful delivery organisation shall be required to fulfil the following throughout the duration of the project:

- Agree a design, delivery and maintenance contract with BaseballSoftballUK for a minimum of three years.
- Develop products and designs for BaseballSoftballUK orders in consultation with and signed off by BaseballSoftballUK, without limit on the number of creative rounds for approval.
- Manage Non-BaseballSoftballUK orders through their website.
- Manage BaseballSoftballUK orders through a direct ordering system. All payments will be invoiced through a purchase order and in line with BaseballSoftballUK's 30-day payment terms.
- Represent its Official Supplier status, BaseballSoftballUK and its products and services on their company website as specified by BaseballSoftballUK.
- Provide the following information on a quarterly basis:
 - Total number of Non-BaseballSoftballUK and BaseballSoftballUK orders.
 - Names and contact details of the Non-BaseballSoftballUK customers purchasing wearable kit.

Timescales

Completed tender documents should be returned to BaseballSoftballUK by 5:00pm on **Friday, 18 December 2020**. This will be followed by a review process, where you may be invited to make a presentation, and a decision will be taken and communicated on **Friday, 15 January 2021**. The finalised agreement will be announced to the public in **January/February 2021**.

Submissions

Tenders can be submitted via email, with the subject line “BaseballSoftballUK Playing Equipment Tender” to chris.knoblock@bsuk.com. For an informal discussion on the tender process, please contact Chris on 07376 297751.

A selection panel reserves the right to select any or none of the tenders received based on their consideration of the full submission. The panel also reserve the right to invite anyone submitting a tender to meet in order to discuss proposals in further detail.

ⁱ <https://www.statista.com/outlook/19030000/156/sports-equipment/united-kingdom>