

Proposals Engineer UK

Department	Sales
Reports To	Sales Director
Location	St Ives, Cambridge, PE27 3LX (with occasional site travel)
Contract Type	Permanent, Full-Time

ABOUT SF ENGINEERING

SF Engineering has been delivering innovative food processing solutions to the FMCG industry for over 40 years. Operating from facilities in St Ives, Cambridgeshire and Grange, Co. Sligo, we design and build bespoke food production line systems for clients across the UK and Ireland. We are currently in an exciting phase of growth — expanding into new markets and evolving our offering towards full turnkey solutions — backed by private equity investment.

We are a business that takes engineering seriously. Our proposals function sits at the commercial heart of how we win work, and the quality of what we put in front of clients directly reflects the calibre of our engineering capability.

ROLE OVERVIEW

The Proposals Engineer is a technically skilled and commercially aware individual who sits at the intersection of engineering and sales. The purpose of the role is to produce high-quality, accurate, and compelling technical and commercial proposals that convert client opportunities into awarded projects.

Working closely with the Sales, Engineering, Project Management, and Procurement teams, the Proposals Engineer will take ownership of the full bid lifecycle — from initial enquiry and cost estimation through to submission, client negotiation support, and internal handover. This role is central to SF Engineering's revenue generation and its ability to grow into new markets and client relationships across the UK and Ireland.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Proposals and Bid Management

- Prepare detailed, accurate, and commercially sound cost estimates for food processing and engineering solutions, ensuring all scope, products, and services are fully captured
- Create, review, and deliver compliant technical and commercial proposals within defined client deadlines, maintaining SF Engineering's standards for quality, accuracy, and presentation
- Prepare and present bid proposals, formal quotations, and contract documentation to clients — both written and in person where required
- Review the commercial aspects of each bid to ensure pricing is complete, defensible, and aligned with SF Engineering's commercial strategy
- Follow and support internal processes for costings, proposals, approvals, and bid governance
- Promote best practice in proposal structure, technical clarity, and commercial presentation
- Support continuous improvement of proposal tools, templates, and the wider sales process

Technical Sales Support

- Provide technical and application support to the Sales team throughout the full bid and sales cycle
- Support customer visits, site surveys, and technical discussions as part of proposal development



ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE BY DESIGN

- Assist the Sales team in managing the full sales cycle, from initial prospecting and opportunity qualification through to deal closure
- Promote and position SF Engineering's technical solutions into the food processing, packaging, and wider industrial markets across the UK and Ireland
- Develop a strong understanding of client requirements, technical specifications, and industry standards within the FMCG and food manufacturing sectors

Internal Collaboration and Handover

- Liaise with Engineering, Project Management, Procurement, and external suppliers to gather accurate technical and commercial inputs for proposals
- Prepare clear, complete handover documentation for Project Managers following successful bid awards, ensuring all commercial and technical commitments are accurately communicated
- Work collaboratively with the wider business to ensure proposals reflect SF Engineering's actual delivery capability and operational constraints
- Support the Sales team and senior management with market intelligence, client feedback, and bid win/loss analysis to continuously improve commercial performance

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- **Experience:** Minimum 3–5 years' experience in a Proposals Engineer, Applications Engineer, Technical Sales Engineer, or similar technically focused commercial role
- **Qualifications:** Bachelor's degree in Engineering — Mechanical, Electrical, Food, Chemical, or a related discipline
- **Cost Estimation:** Strong, demonstrable experience in cost estimation methods and best practice for engineering projects
- **CAD:** Ability to read, interpret, and produce technical drawings using SolidWorks and/or AutoCAD
- **IT Skills:** Proficient in Microsoft Office 365, particularly Excel (for costings and modelling), Word (for proposal writing), and PowerPoint (for client presentations)
- **Communication:** Strong written and verbal communication skills, with the proven ability to produce high-quality technical specifications, quotations, and proposal documents
- **Commercial Acumen:** Demonstrated ability to identify, develop, and convert sales opportunities in a technically complex environment
- **Client Focus:** Customer-focused mindset with strong relationship-building and stakeholder management skills
- **Organisation:** Highly organised, methodical, and detail-oriented — accuracy in proposals is non-negotiable in this role
- **Resilience:** Comfortable working under pressure to tight deadlines while managing multiple bids simultaneously
- **Attitude:** Proactive, self-motivated, and committed to continuous professional development

Desirable

- Background in the FMCG, food processing, beverage, or wider process industries
- Exposure to turnkey project environments where proposals span design, fabrication, installation, and commissioning
- Familiarity with contract forms and commercial terms relevant to capital equipment supply
- Experience presenting proposals and technical solutions directly to clients at senior level

Personal Attributes & Requirements

- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, with the ability to present confidently at all levels



ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE BY DESIGN

- Strong organisational skills with the ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously under pressure
- Commercially astute with a customer-first mindset
- High attention to detail and commitment to quality
- Self-motivated, proactive, and able to work independently as well as within a close-knit team
- Calm under pressure with a solutions-focused approach to problem solving
- Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook, MS Project)

WHAT WE OFFER

- A key role within a globally respected, growing business delivering projects in 63 countries
- Exposure to a wide range of customers and food processing sectors, from red meat and poultry to bakery, dairy, and snacks
- A collaborative, supportive team environment with genuine career development opportunities
- Competitive salary and benefits package