Hellios FSQS-NE

Platform for collecting supplier information

SpareBank 1

SpareBank 1 is committed to responsible and efficient business practices that make it easier for our suppliers to do business with us. To support this commitment, we use the Hellios Financial Supplier Qualification System (FSQS-NE).

It is designed to standardise and manage our requests for compliance and assurance data, along with other major financial services organisations that have adopted FSQS-NE. This will save time for you as a supplier and streamline compliance and risk management for us.

As the regulatory environment becomes more complex, it's important to introduce more standardized and simple mechanisms for collecting and managing supplier assurance information across SpareBank 1. FSQS-NE is also an integral part of our sourcing process.

We also use the system to find pre-qualified suppliers to be considered for new business. Qualified supplier status gives visibility across our procurement process and, therefore, creates potential new business opportunities.

All supplier information in the portal is owned by the supplier itself. It will only be shared with the members of the FSQS-NE community.
A complete list of members of the FSQS-NE community can be found at https://hellios.com/fsqs-ne

Benefits for suppliers

- A single online process to submit assurance and compliance data – reducing duplicate requests from SpareBank 1 and other financial services customers who you provide goods and services to. Compliance requirements which are proportionate to the products and services being provided.
- An online supplier profile which can be updated throughout the year to demonstrate your ongoing compliance with our policies.
- Qualification means you won't have to provide assurance information each time you bid for business with us.

How to qualify

There are two levels of qualification. Stage 1 Qualification collects basic information about your organisation and is used to determine whether Stage 2 Qualification is necessary, based on the nature of the goods or services being supplied.

For example, if a supplier deals directly with our customer data, then they will be asked to demonstrate how they comply with relevant regulatory requirements.

A simple two-stage process

Stage 1 Qualification

Suppliers will receive an email invitation to complete an online questionnaire. The invitation will come from Hellios, an external partner, who has been appointed to collect and administer the data on behalf of SpareBank 1. The Stage 1 questionnaire should take around one hour to complete. This information will allow us to determine whether your organisation only requires Stage 1 Qualification or is required to complete Stage 2 Qualification.

Stage 2 Qualification

Stage 2 requires the completion of a more detailed online questionnaire and, in some areas, may require the provision of supporting evidence. To make the process as efficient as possible, most of the questions have selectable answer options rather than requiring lengthy written responses, and no proprietary, contractual or pricing information will be asked. This stage typically covers your policies and practices in different areas listed in the table on the right.

Funding of FSQS-NE is shared by SpareBank 1 and the other Financial Services organisations that use the system and large suppliers. If your organisation is an autonomous medium, small or micro-sized enterprise (SME), then registration on FSQS-NE is subsidised 100% i.e. there is no charge.

For more information on the registration process and associated fees, visit https://hellios.com/fsqs-ne-fees.

- Anti-Bribery
- Sanction
- Remuneration
- Customer Treatment
- Products and Sales
- Anti-Money Laundering and CFT
- Health & Safety
- Whistleblowing
- Business Continuity
- Information Security
- Cyber Security
- Records Management
- Diversity & Inclusion
- Environmental
- Data Management
- GDPR
- Physical Security
- Operational Resiliency
- IT Asset Management
- Conduct Risk

Timelines for qualifications

Existing suppliers to SpareBank 1 are given up to eight weeks to complete qualification for the first time, to allow sufficient time for familiarisation with the new questionnaires and process. However, we expect most suppliers will be capable of completing qualification in significantly less time. Suppliers bidding for new business with SpareBank 1 may need to complete the qualification much more quickly in accordance with procurement timescales. Hellios will advise the deadline dates for completion in the FSQS-NE email communications that will be issued.

Frequently asked questions

1. Why has SpareBank 1 introduced a Financial Supplier Qualification System?

Collecting compliance and assurance information can be complex and time consuming. The introduction of an online system simplifies the process for suppliers to submit information and prevents suppliers receiving multiple requests from SpareBank 1 for qualification data. It is also important that we (your organisation and SpareBank 1) can demonstrate to our stakeholders that we are working together responsibly to minimise risk across our supply chain to protect our customers. As the regulatory environment we operate in becomes more complex, it is vital that we have a robust system in place to support the collection and maintenance of supplier assurance data and respond to regulatory change.

2. Is it obligatory for us to register?

Yes, registration is SpareBank 1's requirement for all our relevant suppliers.

3. Do we have to register each of our legal entities separately?

Yes, your organisation is required to register any legal entity that submits an invoice to SpareBank 1.

4. Who will have access to the information we provide?

All supplier information in the portal is owned by the supplier itself. It will only be shared with the members of the FSQS-NE community. Other suppliers will not have access to the information you provide.

5. Will assurance information be available across SpareBank 1-alliance?

Yes, one of the benefits of the new system is that suppliers' assurance information will be available across SpareBank 1-alliance. This will reduce requests for duplicate information from us.

6. How are the data protected we provide?

The FSQS-NE application, infrastructure and data storage is hosted in the EU in data centres that are SSAE18 SOC2 and ISO27001 certified. Encryption to the latest industry standards is employed. Hellios ensures the limited amount of personal data collected is fully compliant with the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. Hellios is certified to ISO27001 and Cyber Essentials Plus, the National Cyber Security Centre standard backed by the UK Government.

7. Will I be asked to provide pricing information on my company's products and services?

No, your organisation will not be asked to provide any commercial information of this nature.

8. If I'm required to apply for Stage 2 Qualification, how do I pay the fee to Hellios?

Hellios will provide full details of the payment options available, however we recommend suppliers make an online payment to Hellios so that you can submit the questionnaire as soon as possible.

9. How long is qualification valid for?

The qualification must be renewed annually, all the answers will be pre-populated to facilitate the process. Hellios will issue reminders to suppliers several weeks in advance of their qualification expiry deadline.

10. How long does it take to complete qualification?

Typically, we find it takes less than one business day to enter the information in the system (if you're asked to complete both stages). However, the time required to collate the information varies dependent on the size of an organisation. Larger organisations often have to source the data from a number of internal departments and therefore we're giving existing suppliers approximately eight weeks to complete qualification.

11. As an existing supplier, what happens if I fail to apply for qualification within the assigned timelines?

Suppliers will be fully supported by Hellios throughout the qualification process. However, failure to complete qualification will result in a supplier being classified as non-compliant in our internal systems.

12. Who is Hellios?

Hellios Information is a multinational provider of supplier information systems. The team has extensive experience in collecting and maintaining supplier information on behalf of a number of global blue-chip companies.

13. What is the role of Hellios?

SpareBank 1 has appointed Hellios to collect and administer supplier assurance related data on behalf of SpareBank 1. Hellios will collect and check the data provided by suppliers and ensure the data is maintained on the Financial Services Supplier Qualification System (FSQS-NE). Hellios is an approved supplier of SpareBank 1. Hellios does not assess a supplier's suitability for qualifi-cation. That decision rests with SpareBank 1.

14. Who can I contact for further information?

Please contact Hellios Supplier email: FSQS-NE@hellios.com
or telephone +31 (0)20 399 4730 Monday to Friday 09.00 - 17.00 CET.