

# Request for Proposal

Idea generation and matchmaking software

February 2023, Paris

## 1. Context

EIT Manufacturing (KIC) is focused on promoting entrepreneurship, innovation, and education in the domain of Manufacturing. EIT Manufacturing brings together leading organisations along the entire value chain from smaller companies to larger industry, excellent academic and research institutions, as well as public sector organisations, to promote the transformation of manufacturing towards the digital economy, towards the circular economy and the decarbonization of industry, by removing barriers to innovation, promoting talent and education, leveraging enabling technologies and exploiting big-data.

EIT Manufacturing funds projects to verify and commercialise new ideas, technology, and innovation. To support the idea generation and connections in the manufacturing ecosystem, we are looking for a software that can be incorporated into our social network and open innovation platform AGORA. The platform is open to anyone in the European manufacturing sector and is hosting a dedicated forum (called “sphere”) for EIT Manufacturing’s calls for proposals.

EIT Manufacturing is an association under the law 1901 created in 2019, looking for a software to support idea generation and matchmaking among European innovators in manufacturing sector.

## 2. Description

Ideation and matchmaking are key activities taking place at the beginning of the life cycle of a European call for proposals. Through these activities, European organisations interested in EIT Manufacturing’s calls for proposals are able to connect ideas, needs and capabilities to identify potential partners in a future consortium.

For this reason, EIT Manufacturing is looking for an online platform with the following specifications:

- Direct connection from AGORA using Single Sign-On (SSO) authentication. Currently AGORA has more than 2000 users that should be allowed to access the platform.
- Ability for users to post project ideas and interact with each other (including the ability to attach documents).
- Ability to customise the platform to EIT Manufacturing’s needs. In particular, the platform should initially be open to all ideas, with the possibility to reorganize the ideas according to priorities that will be communicated by EIT Manufacturing at a later stage.
- Ability to extract and store all data once a given call for proposals is closed.

- Ability to restore past data on the platform when it is reopened for a new call for proposals.
- Customer support during European working hours
- Data processing according to GDPR.

### 3. Deliverables

For a given call for proposals, and upon request from EIT Manufacturing, the selected supplier should deliver the following:

- An online platform with the aforementioned technical capabilities, customised to the specific needs of said call (and potentially pre-filled with the data coming from a previous call for proposals)
- An offline extract of the data on the platform at the time of closing of said call for proposals.

The selected supplier should be able to deliver the first platform preferably within one week after confirmation of the award, and no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

### 4. Evaluation Criteria and Award Notification

Timely received proposals submitted by the tenderers will be examined, evaluated, and compared in accordance with the following criteria and the contract shall be awarded to the highest ranked tenderer. The decision will be made according to the “Best Value for Money” principle.

- a. Price (30 %)
- b. Functionality of the proposed solution (40%)
- c. Compliance with the time constraint (30%)

Each bid will be evaluated and ranked according to the criteria above.

An Evaluation Committee of 3 people will be established. Each bid will be evaluated and ranked according to the criteria above.

The compliance with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, equal treatment, and absence of conflict of interest will be ensured.

The successful and unsuccessful tenderers will be informed in writing (via email) about the result of the award procedure. In case the winning tenderer is unable to enter the contract, EIT Manufacturing may decide to contract the supplier receiving the second highest ranking.

Proposals must be submitted by e-mail ([legal@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:legal@eitmanufacturing.eu)) within 7 days of the date of notification of the request for proposal. All proposals received after the deadline will be rejected.

Upon request from the tenderer concerned, EIT Manufacturing will as quickly as possible, and in any event within 15 calendar days from receipt of a written request, inform:

- any unsuccessful candidate of the reasons for the rejection of its request to participate,
- any unsuccessful tenderer of the reasons for the rejection of its tender, including, if this is the case, its decision that the works, supplies or services do not meet the performance or functional requirements,
- any tenderer that has made an admissible tender of the characteristics and relative advantages of the tender selected as well as the name of the successful tenderer or the parties to the awarded contract,
- any tenderer that has made an admissible tender of the conduct and progress of negotiations and dialogue with tenderers.

Information referred to above may be withheld where the release of such information would be contrary to the public interest, would prejudice the legitimate commercial interests of an economic operator, or might prejudice fair competition between economic operators.

Should there be a suspicion that the provider will not be able to perform according to the price offered, EIT Manufacturing has the right to ask for explanations and may reject the tender where the evidence supplied does not satisfactorily account for the low level of price or cost proposed.

## 5. Timeline

The indicative timeline for the call for proposals is as follows:

Activity	Responsible	Date
RFP opening	EIT Manufacturing	17/02/2023
Offer submission	Supplier	28/02/2023
Evaluation and notification of award	EIT Manufacturing	03/03/2023
Contract signature	EIT Manufacturing & selected supplier	14/03/2023
Project start (Kick off meeting)	EIT Manufacturing & selected supplier	15/03/2023

## 6. Negotiations & Clarifications

Negotiations can be held in the following cases:

- if it is identified that the scope of services issued by EIT Manufacturing is not detailed enough, incomplete or some areas are lacking crucial information to complete the procedure for direct awards;
- if EIT Manufacturing has the intention to reduce the offered prices to find the best value for money;
- if all submitted prices are above the planned budget and it is everyone's interest to finish the procedure with success – in that case, price negotiation can take place. During a price negotiation, all tenderers are called to lower their prices by the same deadline in a written form;

EIT Manufacturing can organize as many rounds of negotiation as it is needed during the procedure in order to reach the highest quality of proposals and the best price.

Whenever possible, the negotiations should be carried out in writing, however, in special cases, video conference or even live negotiation can be organized. EIT Manufacturing also reserves the right to invite the tenderers to an individual meeting before the final award of contract in order to clarify details and ambiguities.

Upon receipt of the bids, they will be reviewed, and additional details may be requested from the tenderers as needed. The requests as well as the answers are to be submitted written by e-mail. Where information or documentation to be submitted by tenderers is incomplete or erroneous or where specific documents are missing, EIT Manufacturing staff may request the party concerned to submit, supplement, clarify or complete the relevant information or documentation within 1 day.

Bid preparation costs are not reimbursable and must be borne by the tenderers.

EIT Manufacturing owns all bids received in this RFP. Proprietary information of vendors in the bids will be kept strictly confidential. The offers as well as the contract may be submitted for audits.

## 7. Contract

The final award does not yet constitute the Contract, nor a promise to contract. The winning supplier will be sent the contract to be signed (indicating the deadline by which the signed contract should be returned to EIT Manufacturing). A Framework Contract will be signed, a template of which is annexed to this RfP. The Framework contract establishes the main rules for cooperation and engagement of the parties but does not constitute a purchase. A Specific contract will be signed each time there is a need to purchase from the selected supplier, also annexed to this RfP.

The invoicing will be based on a mutually agreed schedule; it will be detailed in the specific contracts.

The Framework contract that will be awarded will have a maximum duration of 1 year, with possibility of renewal for a second and a third year if EIT Manufacturing believes there is a need. The tenderer agrees

that the total budget that can be spent under the Framework contract and the specific contracts signed with EIT Manufacturing will in no way exceed the amount contained in the bid (the amount contained in the offer) of the tenderer, unless duly justified and approved by EIT Manufacturing.

The awarded supplier will be requested to sign Standard Contractual Clauses (SCC) if no other GDPR compliant safeguards exist, and the supplier is located in a country for which the EU commission has not issued an adequacy decision.

## 8. Cancellation of the proposal procedure

In the event of cancellation of the proposal procedure, EIT Manufacturing will notify tenderers of the cancellation. In no event shall EIT Manufacturing be liable for any damages whatsoever including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected with the cancellation of a proposal procedure, even if EIT Manufacturing has been advised of the possibility of damages.

The tenderer shall take all measures to prevent any situation where the impartial and objective implementation of the contract is compromised for reasons involving economic interest, political or national affinity, family or emotional ties or any other shared interest ('conflict of interests'). S/he should inform the EIT Manufacturing team immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.

The supplier cannot be a EIT Manufacturing Partner or Activity Partner. Any bid from such an economic operator will be rejected.

Tenderers will be excluded if:

- a) they are being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations; they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- b) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the EIT Manufacturing can justify;
- c) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or any other country of the EU;
- d) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity detrimental to the EU's financial interests;
- e) following a procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the EU budget, they have been declared in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

The tenderers must not be in a situation of a conflict of interest, and they have sufficient economic and financial capacity, technical and professional capacity and legal and regulatory capacity to perform the requested services. Additional evidence or declarations might be requested by the contracting authority.

EIT Manufacturing reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities, conflict of interest or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities, conflict of interest or fraud are discovered after the award of the Contract, EIT Manufacturing may refrain from concluding the Contract.