



Request for Proposals

EIT Community Officer
Bulgaria
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1. Overview

1.1 The EIT Manufacturing

EIT Manufacturing is supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), a body of the European Union. It is one of nine Knowledge and innovation communities (KICs) within EIT. EIT Manufacturing's main goal is to bring European stakeholders focused on manufacturing together in innovation ecosystems that add unique value to European products, processes and services and inspire the creation of globally competitive and sustainable manufacturing. EIT Manufacturing brings together more than 170 organisations amongst core and associate universities, research institutes, business, and partners.

EIT Manufacturing has signed a Partnership Agreement and a Grant Agreement¹ with EIT and receives funding from EIT based on these agreements under the Horizon Europe² and the EIT Regulation³. EIT Manufacturing is also an association under the French law 1901 created in 2019. Headquartered in Paris area, it has six Co-Location Centres (CLC) across Europe which promote the KIC's activities in the different geographies. EIT Manufacturing's Co-Location Centres (CLCs) are strategically situated to link regions with high levels of manufacturing activity and advanced technology.

EIT Manufacturing is looking for a company or professional to sign a consulting contract based on deliverables to act as its EIT Community Officer in Bulgaria. Interested parties can submit a proposal containing the requirements described in this RfP within the specified timeframe.

1.2 The European Institute of Innovation and Technology and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities

The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) is a European Union body established by Regulation (EC) No 294/2008 of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 March 2008.

The EIT's mission is to contribute to the sustainable European economic growth and global competitiveness by reinforcing the innovation capacity of the Member States and the Union and addressing major challenges faced by the European society. It does this by promoting synergies and cooperation through integrating higher education, research, and business in order to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the knowledge triangle integration model. The EIT combines strategic orientation at EIT level, primarily through its Governing Board, with a bottom-up approach within the thematic remits of its Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). KICs are highly integrated legal entities, which function as pan-European partnerships and bring together excellent universities, research organizations, small-, medium and large enterprises and other innovation actors on a long-term commitment around specific grand societal challenges.

The Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) are designated by the EIT on the basis of an open competitive call. In 2009, the EIT designated three initial KICs in the fields of sustainable energy (EIT InnoEnergy), climate change adaptation and mitigation (EIT Climate-KIC) and next generation information society (EIT Digital, until 2015 named EIT ICT Labs). In 2014, two new KICs were designated in the areas of healthy living and active ageing (EIT Health) and raw materials- sustainable

¹ On the basis of the HEU Model Grant Agreement: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/common/agr-contr/general-mga_horizon-euratom_en.pdf

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32021R0695&qid=1696502753369>

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32021R0819>

exploration, extraction, processing, recycling, and substitution (EIT Raw Materials). In 2016 the EIT selected one additional KIC: EIT Food – sustainable supply chain from resources to consumers. In 2018 two KICs were designated in the thematic areas of Urban Mobility and Adding Value Manufacturing. In 2022 the newest KIC was designated to house a sustainable ecosystem for European Cultural and Creative Sectors and Industries (CCSI). Each KIC has been set up as a legal entity and has appointed a CEO to run its operations – a first for an EU initiative. The KICs operate under a great degree of autonomy to define their legal status, internal organization and working methods, and the KICs have been conceived so that they are able to react in an effective and flexible way to new challenges and changing environments.

Each KIC has regional Co-location Centres (Innovation Hubs) with partners in proximity, which is essential to facilitate interaction among members of the regional community. Co-location Centres are the focal point for the KICs' activity within these areas of focus. Co-location Centres build on the existing labs, offices, or campuses of some of the KICs' core partners, which serve as clusters for a particular region, discipline, or task. There they bring together people and teams from across the knowledge triangle for ideation, projects, and other initiatives. Partners in KICs work together with a common goal: a positive societal and economic impact for Europe, to be measured in terms of new business creation, innovation in existing emerging industries, businesses and SMEs, jobs creation, entrepreneurship education and delivery of a new generation of entrepreneurs, and the overall success of the KIC in addressing societal challenges within their priority thematic areas.

1.3 The Regional Innovation Scheme

The EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (EIT RIS) was introduced by the European Parliament and the Council as part of the EIT's Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) 2014-2020. The EIT RIS is designed to share good practices and experience emerging from the EIT Community's activities, as well as to widen participation in KICs' activities. The aim of the EIT RIS is to help disseminate the knowledge and know-how of the EIT Community and widen participation in the KICs across Europe. The EIT RIS focuses on countries that are moderate and modest innovators according to the [European Innovation Scoreboard](#) and have limited or no participation in the EIT Community's activities.

Countries eligible to take part in the EIT RIS (2021-2024):

- EU Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.
- Horizon Europe Associated Countries: Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Türkiye, Ukraine.
- Outermost Regions: Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Réunion, Martinique, Mayotte and Saint-Martin (France), the Azores and Madeira (Portugal), and the Canary Islands (Spain).

1.3.1 The EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation cluster

EIT Community SRI Cluster is a joint activity of several KICs, funded by the EIT, to implement cross-sectoral actions to boost innovation in Europe's emerging economies, including those countries eligible for support under the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS). The objective of the Cluster is to bring together all of the EIT KICs in the context of one formal project to enable joint learning and improve the efficiency of the KICs' RIS projects and activities by sharing best practices, and utilizing synergies built on common geographical and thematic interest. The guiding and decision-making body of the EIT Community Strategic Regional Innovation cluster is the Steering committee composed of two representatives of each KIC. The KICs that actively take part in the EIT Community SRI Cluster are:

- EIT Climate-KIC: Working to accelerate the transition to a zero-carbon economy;
- EIT Digital: Driving Europe's digital transformation;
- EIT Food: Leading a global revolution in food innovation and production;
- EIT Health: Giving EU citizens greater opportunities to enjoy a healthy life;
- EIT InnoEnergy: Achieving a sustainable energy future for Europe;

- EIT Manufacturing: Strengthening and increasing the competitiveness of Europe’s manufacturing industry;
- EIT RawMaterials: Developing raw materials into a major strength for Europe;
- EIT Urban Mobility: Smart, green and integrated transport;
- EIT Culture and Creativity: Creatives without borders, innovation without limits.

1.3.2 EIT Community SRI cluster actions for Bulgaria

The actions of the EIT Community SRI Cluster will aim to address the needs of the Bulgarian innovation including:

- Exploring and establishing strategic alliances. Establishment of the EIT Community SRI representation on-the- ground in form of an EIT Community RIS Hub, managed by an EIT Community Officer. The EIT Community RIS Hub will help to strengthen the activities of the EIT Community SRI Cluster, as well as the activities run by EIT KICs individually, especially by connecting the EIT Community with relevant Bulgarian stakeholders, assisting in the preparation of EIT Community events, participation in national-level events to promote the EIT Community, scouting for high-potential Bulgarian startups and talent, etc.
- Upskilling/reskilling talents into entrepreneurs and paving the way towards increased uptake into EU programs through the EIT Jumpstarter.

The main focus of the support activities of the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster in Bulgaria will be laid upon deep tech solutions in the fields covered by the KICs listed above. This doesn’t exclude other areas. Apart from these activities the EIT Community SRI Cluster in close cooperation with other EIT Community Clusters and individual EIT KICs will maintain an overview of the implementation status of all EIT Community Bulgaria, support actions to identify potential further EIT Community Bulgaria actions for joint delivery and, as appropriate, take forward the development of these actions into joint proposals.

The Cluster will also drive the EIT Community’s efforts to explore synergies with pan-European programs and organizations also supporting Bulgaria. The actions for Bulgaria within SRI Cluster, including EIT Community Officer of the EIT Community RIS Hub for Bulgaria, are coordinated by EIT Manufacturing.

1.3.3 EIT RIS Hubs in RIS Countries

In order to promote KICs activities in the EIT RIS countries, KICs engage local organizations to serve as EIT RIS Hubs in the respective EIT RIS countries and regions. KICs have established EIT RIS Hubs in the countries where they did not have presence in terms of Co-location Centres or partners. Hence, an EIT Hub functions as a representative of the respective KIC and mobilizes local organizations to take part in joint activities with the KICs.

Local organizations are selected through an open competitive selection process and are designated to function as an EIT Hub for a specific KIC. The primary role of an EIT Hub is to ensure the visibility of the EIT Community and raise awareness of the EIT Community activities and cooperation opportunities for local players representing education, business and research areas. The organizations serving as EIT Hubs have a strong footing in local ecosystems and help promote KICs’ good practices and know-how of KTI. In addition, EIT Hubs also liaise with the relevant national, regional and local authorities and facilitate the sharing of EIT Innovation Community expertise with them. A network of over 90 EIT RIS Hubs present in all EU Member States and beyond drive the successful implementation of the EIT RIS. The EIT RIS Hubs have helped the EIT Community to significantly widen its geographical spread.

2. General objectives and scope of work

2.1. General objectives

In order to ensure the provision of the services described in section 2.2, EIT Manufacturing was designated to launch an open service procurement procedure, on behalf of the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster, whose overall goals are presented in chapter 2.2.2.

In the framework of the present service procurement, EIT Manufacturing is seeking to appoint one professional in Bulgaria to overtake the position of the EIT Community Officer. The aforementioned EIT Community Officer will undertake the facilitation and support of the local EIT Community RIS Hubs and other members. Detailed definition and scope of the EIT Community Officer and EIT Community RIS Hub can be found in section 2.2.2.

In this context, on behalf of EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster, EIT Manufacturing is aiming to conclude a direct contract for one EIT Community Officer in Bulgaria by the present procurement procedure. The present procedure aims at the provision of the necessary services and handling the volume of such services as detailed in the [EIT RIS HUBS Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles](#). The EIT RIS HUBS Minimum Standards and Guiding principles might be subject to updates.

The specifications of the present Request for Proposals (RFP) will become an integral part of the contract that will be concluded following the award procedure. Non-compliance to them during the performance of the contract may constitute a reason for EIT Manufacturing to terminate it.

2.2. Definitions & detailed scope of work

2.2.1 Definitions

EIT Community RIS Hubs (EIT CRH) - Refers to the network of hubs established across Europe under the EIT Regional Innovation Scheme (RIS), aiming to foster innovation and entrepreneurship by linking local innovation actors with the broader EIT ecosystem.

EIT Community Officer (ECO) – An individual or entity appointed to represent and coordinate the activities of the EIT Community RIS Hubs at a national level. ECOs are responsible for tasks as outlined in detail in the “[EIT RIS HUBS Minimum Standards and Guiding Principles](#)” document, specifically in the “List of Tasks and Responsibilities of the EIT Community Officer”. Among their key duties are facilitating communication, organizing events, consolidating data, and ensuring adherence to EIT standards and principles without exerting hierarchical control over RIS Hub entities.

2.2.2 Scope of Work⁴

Alongside the below elaborated key operational areas, the EIT Community Officer is responsible to deploy the governance Memorandum of Understanding between the EIT community RIS Hubs members, which will regulate their roles and responsibilities, coordination instruments, code of conduct and conflict resolution policy. A standard MoU template will be facilitated by the Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations Cluster.

⁴ The estimated dedication for the performance of this assignment is 1 FTE, which converts to approximately 1600 hours per year.

The support that is required and requested to the EIT Community Officer is covering three key operational areas:

1. Events and dissemination

- Lead the organisation of shared EIT Community awareness-raising events.
- Maintain awareness and respect other dissemination and scouting, thematic-specific events organised by EIT Community members.
- Support the participation of EIT Community representatives in relevant national events.
- Design appropriate methods and tools for information sharing and coordination.
- Actively collect and disseminate information about the KICs' funding opportunities, events, and other initiatives organised or promoted by the KICs through applicable channels.
- Coordinate the collection and dissemination of funding opportunities and key events from national, regional and third-party sources, other than those from the KICs.
- Manage and update the EIT Community RIS Hub website, in the local language, with information on EIT Community activities and opportunities, including dedicated sections targeted towards specific stakeholders, including, students, start-ups, national authorities and so on.

2. Leading Role

- Scout for and recommend to the EIT KICs opportunities to implement joint projects financed through other EU / national / regional funds (including ESIF and IPA III).
- Suggest and support, including, where appropriate and with the agreement of the EIT KICs, lead the implementation of possible joint activities amongst the EIT KICs, to be implemented nationally and / or regionally, aligned with relevant RIS3 priorities.
- At the request of the EIT KICs, support any necessary updating of the local Country-specific roadmap and support with its implementation, as appropriate.
- Serve as a centralised contact gateway for local stakeholders to the EIT Community as a whole, and refer stakeholders to contact persons within other relevant EIT KICs, best suited to support their needs.

3. Supporting Role

- Keep an up-to-date record of all entities which are members (MoU signatories) of the EIT CRH and involve them in the coordination of the EIT CRH as set out in the EIT CRH governance MoU.
- Develop a thorough understanding of the EIT model and staying updated with the activities of the KICs.
- Establish good working relationships with all EIT Community RIS Hub members and other EIT KIC offices at both national and regional levels.
- Set up and maintain a physical space in the commonly decided city of operation, where local stakeholders, including NCPs, can access information about the EIT Community.
- Support for a coordinated approach amongst the EIT KICs' RIS Hubs towards national authorities including relevant NCPs and managing authorities.
- In consultation with the EIT Community RIS Hub members, and other EIT KIC Offices present in the same ecosystem, establish a smooth and efficient working method which limits the administrative burden on the EIT Community RIS Hub Members, and other EIT KIC Offices, while supporting their minimum functions.
- Provide support, additional to that already offered by the EIT RIS Hubs, to the EIT and the EIT KICs with navigating the local innovation landscape, including by contributing to the development of EIT maps / ecosystem mapping.
- Actively contribute to securing co-funding opportunities, including arranging meetings with relevant national/regional authorities.

All tasks will be in full coordination with EIT Manufacturing (as Contracting Authority) and the Cross-KIC RIS Steering Committee to ensure strategic fit and alignment of the selected contractor, activities, timing, and execution. The EIT Community Officer will act independently of any EIT KIC, and at the same time will represent all the KICs to ensure impartiality and avoid conflict of interests.

The indicative key performance indicators for the EIT Community Officer are included in Annex 3 (elaborated by the Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovations Cluster). Please note, that the list of the afore-mentioned minimum KPIs might still be changed, however these minimum KPIs should be met by the EIT Community Officers during their yearly activities.

2.2.3 Location

All services will be provided in person and online in Bulgaria. Video conferences and telephone conferences are preferred options for team meetings.

However, tenderers are requested to set up and maintain a physical office space in one the following cities, Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna or Burgas.; as it has been emphasized under section 3.3.

Tenderers are requested to share their ideas about the physical space including a cost estimate - in their technical offer.

2.2.4 Payment terms

The amount of funding for the provision of services are described as follows below:

First year of contract:

FY2024: 26.268,123 EUR maximum available funds. Out of the 26.268,123 EUR maximum available funds, 4,588.32 EUR can be dedicated to incidental costs.

Second year of contract (in case of renewal of contract based on the achievement of the KPIs by the candidate as provided in this RfP):

FY2025: 52.536,264 EUR maximum available funds. Out of the 52.536,264 EUR maximum available funds, 9,176.64 EUR can be dedicated to incidental costs.

Service fees do not include value-added tax (VAT), and whether VAT is included or not will be determined by the legislation in the Supplier's country. Particularly in instances of cross-border invoicing, Suppliers are required to furnish documentation demonstrating VAT deductibility or service type exemption according to local authority regulations to EIT Manufacturing's Finance Department. After EIT Manufacturing's approval of the presented proof of VAT deductibility, suppliers may then invoice the net amount with the designation "VAT reverse charged".

Please, note that this cost estimation is the maximum funding available, covering all potential costs, including optional cost (like office cost) as well.

The EIT Community Officer will be compensated based on a performance-based system of remuneration. The total payment within the duration of the contract must not exceed the contracted amount.

The services should be invoiced by areas, including specific timesheets, according to the following schedule:

Timeframe for the provision of services

Step	Period	Month	Description	Additional comments
Set up	Month 7, year 1	July, 2024	Contracting with successful applicant will take place in July 2024. Delivery of the services will start as soon as the contracting is finalized.	
Onboarding and kick-off	Month 7, year 1	July 2024	EIT Community Officer onboarding and kick-off. EIT Community Officer updates the „Yearly action plan” (delivered in his / her proposal), based on feedback of the evaluation of the leading KIC. EIT Cross-KIC SRI Cluster Steering Committee approves the adapted “Yearly action plan”.	Once contracting is closed, pre-finance payment (30% yearly budget), upon approval of Yearly action plan.
First performance review (July-December 2024)	Month 12, year 1	December 2024	In December 2024 EIT Community Officer submits its first midterm activity report (July-November 2024). A template will be provided by the EIT Cross-KIC SRI Cluster. EIT Community Officer will have signed the governance MoU among EIT CRH members. EIT Cross-KIC SRI Cluster Steering Committee will review the first midterm activity report.	Second payment (40% yearly budget), upon successful assessment of the first performance review and and signatory of the EIT CRH governance MoU.
Yearly Performance review (July-December 2024)	Month 1, year 2	January 2025	January 2025. EIT Community Officers submit their yearly activity report (July- Dec 2024). A template will be provided by the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster. EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee will review the yearly activity	Balance payment (30% yearly budget), upon successful assessment of the yearly performance review.

			report and if performance is deemed successful and budget is allocated, renewal will be considered.	
Adaptation of the yearly action plan for 2025	Month 1, Year 2	January 2025	EIT Community Officer updates the „Yearly action plan” for 2025 (delivered in his / her proposal), based on feedbacks of the evaluation of the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee. EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee approves the adapted „Yearly action plan”.	Pre-finance payment (30% of yearly budget), upon approval of the Yearly action plan for 2025.
First performance review (January- July 2025)	Month 7, year 2	July 2025	In July 2025 EIT Community Officer submits its first midterm activity report (Jan-June 2025). A template will be provided by the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster. EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee will review the midterm activity report for 2025.	Second payment (40% yearly budget), upon successful assessment of the first performance review for 2025.
Yearly performance review (July-December 2025)	Month 1, year 3	January 2026	In January 2026 EIT Community Officers submits their yearly activity report (January- Dec 2025). A template will be provided by the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster. EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering committee will review the yearly report and if performance is deemed successful and budget is allocated, renewal will be considered.	Last payment of activity year 2025 (30% yearly budget)

The payment of all related taxes and other costs (VAT and other taxes, social contributions, and similar obligatory costs) is the responsibility of the applicant. Delayed or missing payments of the above obligations cannot be accepted by EIT Manufacturing and will lead to the termination of the contract.

On a needed basis, the provider can be called for specific assignments either to EIT Manufacturing, EIT or the Cross-KIC Steering Committee or any other project site designated by EIT Manufacturing. All costs borne for such travels shall be subject to reimbursement detailed later by EIT Manufacturing if justified.

2.3 Methodology of work

The EIT Community officer will align with the EIT Manufacturing RIS Manager, the relevant RIS managers of the corresponding KICs, the Steering Committee and the representative of EIT on a regular basis. The work of the EIT Community officer might be supported by an Advisory Board (consisting of representatives of startup environment, large corporates and Horizon Europe.) in case the Cross-KIC SRI Cluster and the EIT Community officer believe it is of crucial importance. If such expertise is necessary, the role of the above expert team is to provide strategic advice on implementing the EIT ECO’s activity plan and complementarity of the local needs and opportunities, to give an overview of relevant policies, identifying relevant gaps or areas for improvement where EIT activities should be created, and identifying potential opportunities for creating synergies with EIT Communities towards innovation and growth. The members of such an expert team should undertake their mandate on a pro bono basis.

Meetings between the EIT Community officer and the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster

The following meetings are planned between the ECO and the EIT IT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster:

Year 1

Preparatory call	<p>Prior to the kick-off meeting, the EIT Headquarters and the EIT Community officer will organise a preparatory call to discuss the scope of the contract and the role the ECO together with the representatives of the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster.</p> <p>Format: online.</p>
Onboarding and Kick-off meeting	<p>At the start of the contract the ECO will be invited to a full day introduction and a kick-off meeting with the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster and with the representatives of the EIT Headquarters.</p> <p>The yearly action plan submitted by the ECO shall be reviewed and updated during the kick-off meeting. The action plan shall be approved by the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster Steering Committee.</p> <p>Format: online</p>
Status calls	<p>At the kick-off meeting, the representatives of EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster and EIT Headquarters will inform the ECO on the frequency of the status calls.</p> <p>Format: online.</p>

Year 2

Status Calls	<p>The frequency will be confirmed at the closing meeting of Year 1.</p> <p>Format: online.</p>
Status Calls	<p>The frequency will be confirmed at the closing meeting of Year 2.</p>

	Format: online.
Final Status Calls	The meeting will be held to draw conclusions on the implemented service and lessons learnt and address any other topics that might arise. Format will be confirmed in year 2.

2.4 Deliverables

All services shall be provided within the contract period.

The EIT Community Officer is expected to produce the following deliverables each year:

- 1) Yearly action plan describing the main activities, success criteria, targets for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and *modus operandi* of the EIT Community Officer.
- 2) First performance review (cover the period July-December), using the template provided by the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster.
- 3) Yearly Performance review (refers to the months of actions executed) using the template provided by the EIT Cross- KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster.
- 4) Monthly progress briefs to be submitted to the EIT Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster describing the main activities undertaken by the EIT Community Officer and main achievements. Depending on the amount of information to be included in the respective reporting period, the reports should on average have 3-4 4A pages.
- 5) Minutes of all the meetings held with EIT Community RIS Hub Community Members, EIT KIC Offices representatives and external stakeholders (annexed to the monthly briefs).

The first year Performance review is estimated to the end of 2024.

Description of Deliverable	Year 1 (2024)		Year 2 (2025)	
	Code	Month	Code	Month
Yearly action plan	DEL1_Y1	7	DEL1_Y2	1
First year Performance review (July-December 2024.)	DEL2_Y1	12	N/A	N/A
Second year Performance review (January-December 2025)	N/A	N/A	DEL2_Y2	12
1 st Monthly progress brief	DEL3_Y1	7	DEL3_Y2	1
2 nd Monthly progress brief	DEL4_Y1	8	DEL4_Y2	2
3 rd Monthly progress brief	DEL5_Y1	9	DEL5_Y2	3
4 th Monthly progress brief	DEL6_Y1	10	DEL6_Y2	4

5 th Monthly progress brief	DEL7_Y1	11	DEL7_Y2	5
6 th Monthly progress brief	DEL8_Y1	12	DEL8_Y2	6
First performance review (January-July 2025)	N/A	N/A	DEL9_Y2	6
7 th Monthly progress brief	N/A	N/A	DEL10_Y2	7
8 th Monthly progress brief	N/A	N/A	DEL11_Y2	8
9 th Monthly progress brief	N/A	N/A	DEL12_Y2	9
10 th Monthly progress brief	N/A	N/A	DEL13_Y2	10
11 th Monthly progress brief	N/A	N/A	DEL14_Y2	11
12 th Monthly progress brief	N/A	N/A	DEL15_Y2	12

3. Proposal Process

3.1. Estimated Timeline

The deadline to submit the proposal is **28th of March, 2024 by 18:00 hrs** Central European Time.

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

Activity	Responsible	Date
RfP opening	EIT Manufacturing	27 th of February, 2024
Proposal submission deadline	Supplier	28th of March, 2024 by 18:00 hrs
Eligibility check	EIT Manufacturing	Conducted until 15 th of April, 2024
Evaluation of eligible applicants	EIT Manufacturing	Until 3 rd June, 2024
Round of interviews of applicants	EIT Manufacturing	From 15 th April until 17 th May, 2024
Notification of the selected candidate	EIT Manufacturing	Until 10 th of June
Contract signature	EIT Manufacturing & selected supplier	June 2024
Activity Kick Off	Selected EIT Community Officer	July 2024

All proposals shall be submitted within the above-mentioned deadline containing the requirements mentioned in this RfP to the following email: procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu

After the end of the deadline to the proposal submission, the pre-selected candidates will be invited to a round of interviews.

The non-selected candidates will also be informed of the results of their application.

Proposals that do not meet the RfP requirements will not be considered.

3.2. Candidates' Eligibility Requirements

Candidates shall meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. In alignment with performed consultancy of Bulgarian representatives on the EIT Member State Representative Group the agreement was reached that candidates must have their place of business in one of the following cities of Bulgaria: Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna or Burgas. Please, note that the office of the candidate to be selected for the role of EIT Community Officer should be located in one of these cities whilst ensuring best access and proximity to the project's key local stakeholders including the Bulgarian Horizon Europe National contact points.
2. Candidates must speak English and Bulgarian fluently.
3. Candidates must demonstrate a minimum of previous experience in the activities to be carried out within this RfP.
4. Candidates must not be involved in any situations that indicate a Conflict of Interest and/or that qualify them for other exclusion scenarios, as outlined in sections 4.4 and 4.8 of this RfP.

3.3. Proposal Requirements

3.3.1 Proposal submission inventory:

The email including the proposal complying with the detailed proposal template referred to in Annex 2 must cover the mentioned materials below i.e General, Targeting actions 2024, Targeting actions 2024 (technical part) and financial proposal (financial part). Evaluation and award criteria can be found in section 4. The deadline for submission is the 28th of March, 18:00hrs Central European Time.

The following formats are requested for positive admission, receipt, and acceptance of proposals:

- Proposals must be submitted in proper (legible) scanned and non-editable PDF.
- Proposals must be submitted in English.
- Proposals must be signed physically or electronically by the tenderer.
- Proposals will be deemed timely submitted, if it is received by EIT Manufacturing by the submission deadline. All risks associated with the delay or loss of the proposal shall be borne by the Tenderer only. EIT Manufacturing will deem proposal received after the submission deadline invalid.
- Proposals should be concise and clear. The candidate's proposal will be incorporated into any contract that results from this procedure. The candidate is, therefore, cautioned not to make claims or statements that they are not prepared to commit to contractually.
- The candidate represents that the individual submitting the natural entity's proposal is duly authorized to bind its entity to the proposal as submitted. The tenderer also affirms that it has read the request for proposals and has the experience, skills and resources to perform, according to conditions set forth in this proposal and the tenderers' proposal.
- Proposals must be submitted along with the documentation required in this RfP including its Annexes 1 and 2 (i.e. the Tenders Declaration of Honor as well as the Detailed Proposal Template).

A. General (Technical Part):

- A comprehensive CV of the candidate (natural person) or a full presentation of the legal entity applying to the RfP containing professional/commercial references.
- The technical response to the services requested (see Section 2.2: 'Detailed scope of work⁵'). Technical description in detail of how the services described in the RFP will be provided by the candidate.
- The 5 main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem in Bulgaria, prioritised based on importance, how would you target them with your actions and adequate solution for the problems. (max. 1 page).
- Ideas of the candidate for the physical space of the ECO office - including the city proposed, justification of location and relevant line of argumentation how best access & proximity to key local stakeholders including the Bulgarian Horizon Europe National contact points will be ensured, a cost estimate and description of the office space: (max. 0,5 page)

Size (m2): Functions:

Category of the office building:

Where is the office located:

⁵ Detailed scope of work for the implementation of tasks proposed by the candidate, organization and methodology together with the Activity plan plus the narrative part cannot exceed 10 pages.

(Please, note that the office should be located in one of the following cities whilst ensuring best access and proximity to the project's key local stakeholders including the Bulgarian Horizon Europe National contact points.: Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna or Burgas).

Name of hosting institution (if applicable):

B. Targeting actions 2024 (Technical Part):

An activity plan for the year of 2024⁶ with the following mandatory activities and taking into consideration the Indicative list of key performance indicators and minimum targets⁷ (see Annex 3) for the EIT Community Officers has to be submitted including:

- Signature the EIT Community Hub Governance MoU with the local KICs' RIS Hubs and the EIT NCP.
- Mapping of local ecosystem and stakeholders
- Local event mapping
- Awareness raising activities (supporting the EIT Community awareness-raising events)
- Organizing info events (supporting the EIT Community information events and mapping the events of the local stakeholders which can be of interest for the EIT Community)
- Collecting information on local funding opportunities (and how to bring these to the attention to the local Hub Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices)
- Updating the common platform (database accessible for the KICs on local calls, events, etc.)
- Additional activities proposed by the Candidate.

C. Targeting actions 2025 (Technical Part):

As an additional narrative part to the submitted plan of 2024, a draft activity plan for the year of 2025 targeting the Key Performance indicators has to be submitted. The following points have to be targeted, accounting for a coherent continuation of the work carried out in 2024:

- Description on how the tenderer plans to co-ordinate the events, organize meetings, his/her capacity to co-ordinate the events and liaise with EIT RIS Hubs, stakeholders, etc. (max. 1 page)
- Description of the Candidate's plans to reach and establish good working relationships with the RIS Hubs and other stakeholders (max. 1 page)
- A short description on the local funding opportunities and how these can be funneled to the KICs' activities (max. 1 page)
- Description of the capacity of the candidate to provide extra services to RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.(max. 1 page)

D. Financial proposal (Financial Part):

The financial proposal (the price for the service.) The financial proposal must be presented in EUR. The price must be indicated as gross amount, excluding (VAT).

⁶ When composing the Activity for 2024 please, try to cover as many KPIs from Annex 5 as possible.

⁷ Candidates are requested to propose KPI targets in their activity plan e.g. number of organized co-ordination meetings, EIT Community awareness-raising events, joint meetings for all KICS with regional/local/ national authorities, meetings with external stakeholders, etc. Final request of KPIs will be defined and agreed upon signature of contract.

Please note, that the office space cost is to be included in the financial proposal even in the case that no facilitation is provided, as mentioned in the section 2.2.2. The Cross-KIC Strategic Regional Innovation Cluster can decide to use the offered option or to suggest hosting for the EIT Community Hub, if a better option is given. Cost of the office space should be indicated under cost category *C.3 - Other goods, works and services (€) including office related costs of the budget proposal*.

Suggestion for co-financing of the EIT Community Officer`s activities / operation might also be included if there is any.

As all incidental expenditures must be verified by invoices, only *budget line A) - Personnel* of the financial proposal will be taken into consideration during financial evaluation.

4. Evaluation of Proposals

4.1 Minimum eligibility criteria

- Natural person is the resident of the country.
- Legal entity has a registered office in the country. In case Applicant is a legal entity, only a sole candidate/expert will be appointed for the full duration of the services, and the appointed expert should fulfil the requirements below:
- Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in the official language/s/ of the country.
- Candidate possesses C1 level fluency in English.
- Candidate has a university or a related higher education degree in business, economics, law, political science, environmental studies, sustainability, or other innovation related fields.
- Candidate has at least 3 years of professional experience in innovation, entrepreneurship and/or European affairs as project manager or key expert.
- Managed / worked as key expert for at least 1 EU-financed project for at least one year.
- Connection to and knowledge of the local innovation ecosystem, (Delivered projects for Innovation ecosystem development in the last 8 years).
- Knowledge of the EIT system, collaboration experience with EIT/EIT KICs/RIS Hubs in the last 8 years.
- Experience with networking services. [events organised, studies or other services provided for international networks] in the last 8 years.

4.2 Exclusion criteria

The candidate will be excluded from participation in the current procedure, if:

- a) it is bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding-up procedures, where its assets are being administered by a liquidator or by a court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended, or where it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for under national laws or regulations;
- b) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the Tenderer is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions in accordance with the applicable law;
- c) it has been established by a final judgment or a final administrative decision that the Tenderer is guilty of grave professional misconduct by having violated applicable laws or regulations or ethical standards of the profession to which the Tenderer belongs, or by having engaged in any wrongful conduct which has an impact on its professional credibility where such conduct denotes a wrongful intent or gross negligence, including, in particular, any of the following:
 - i. fraudulently or negligently misrepresenting information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of selection criteria or in the performance of a contract;
 - ii. entering into agreement with other Tenderers with the aim of distorting competition;
 - iii. violating intellectual property rights;
 - iv. attempting to influence the decision-making process of the contracting authority during the procurement procedure;
 - v. attempting to obtain confidential information that may confer upon it undue advantages in the

procurement procedure; it has been established by a final judgment that the Tenderer is guilty of fraud, corruption or money laundering.

- vi. The proposal does not meet the requirements described of this Request for Proposals.
- vii. Any evidence of a conflict of interest discovered during the evaluation process will render the candidate's application invalid. Candidates are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest that may compromise the fairness and integrity of the selection process. Failure to provide accurate and complete information regarding conflicts of interest may result in disqualification from consideration for the project or opportunity outlined in this Request for Proposals (RfP). The EIT Manufacturing reserves the right to assess and determine the impact of any conflicts of interest on the impartiality and objectivity of the selection process.

4.3 Award criteria

The EIT Manufacturing will award the contract to the candidate who submitted the most advantageous technical and financial proposal based on best value for money based on the following criteria (including the weighting assigned to them).

The quality of each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the below mentioned award criteria.

The award criteria will be examined in accordance with the requested service/support indicated in Section 2 of the document and ensure best value for money by applying the below equation. The technical score assessed at 70% of the overall evaluation score board is calculated based on the assessment rating below:

DESCRIPTION	SCORE
Action Plan evaluation	Max. 70 points
1. Feasibility of the candidate 's action plan, his/her yearly program – overall methodology and work of scope.	10 points
2. Content of the proposal, detailed description, attention to details of the submitted proposal. Quality of the proposal and organization of candidate's services.	10 points
3. How the candidate plans to co-ordinate the events, organize meetings, his/her capacity to co-ordinate the events and liaise with EIT RIS Hubs, stakeholders, etc.	5 points
4. How the candidate plans to reach and establish good working relationships with the RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.	10 points
5. Knowledge on local funding opportunities and a plan how to funnel them into KICs activities	10 points
6. Capacity of the candidate to provide extra services to RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.	10 points
7. Creativity of the proposal – Out of the box thinking	5 points
8. Candidate's proposed city for ECO office establishments in terms	10 points

of facilitation, proximity and accessibility to the relevant stakeholders ⁸	
Interview phase	Max 40 points
A - Communication skills of the candidate in English and Bulgarian. <i>(Please note that speaking English and Bulgarian fluently is a requirement of this Request for Proposals).</i>	
1. How easily and clearly can candidate express herself/himself in English.	10 points
2. To what extent is the candidate able to understand and take part in innovation and work-related communications.	10 points
B- Identifying the 5 main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem in Bulgaria	
1. Candidate identified the main gaps in the local innovation ecosystem. (Number of main gaps identified 1 Gap = 2 points 2 Gaps = 4 points 3 Gaps = 6 points, etc.)	10 points
2. Candidate prioritized the main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem based on importance. (Number of main gaps prioritized 1 Gap = 1 point 2 Gaps = 2 points 3 Gaps = 3 points, etc.)	5 points
3. Candidate offered adequate solution / actions for the gaps in the local innovation ecosystem.	5 points

The applicable award criteria will be weighted as follows:

A. Technical content: 70 %

B. Financial offer: 30 %

Aggregate evaluation and scoring:

A. Technical content (maximum weighted score: 70 %)

Evaluation of the technical content will be carried out following the below sub-criteria:

I. Technical capacity of the Tenderer (maximum score: 110)

⁸ Location of EIT Community RIS Hub office proposed by applicant with best accessibility and proximity to relevant regional and national authorities and relevant national stakeholders in the local innovation ecosystem including the Bulgarian Horizon Europe National contact points will be positively accounted for evaluation.

As for the Action Plan criterion, the method of the evaluation is as follows:

Where the highest ranking is 10 points, the highest will receive 10 points, 2nd 7, 3rd 4, 4th 1.

- 10 points – Exceeds the required standards, response to the question with precision and relevance.
- 7 points – Meets the standard required. Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question.
- 4 points – Meets the standards in most aspects but fails in some areas. Acceptable level of detail, accuracy and relevance.
- 1 point – Meets only some of the aspect of the standards. Limited information, inadequate or only partially addressed the question.

Where the highest ranking is 5 points, the highest will receive 5 points, 2nd 4, 3rd 3, 4th 1.

- 5 points – Exceeds the required standards, response to the question with precision and relevance.
- 4 points – Meets the standard required. Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question.
- 3 points – Meets the standards in most aspects but fails in some areas. Acceptable level of detail, accuracy and relevance.
- 1 point – Meets only some of the aspect of the standards. Limited information, inadequate or only partially addressed the question.

B. Financial offer (maximum weighted score: 30%)

The financial offer must be presented in EUR. Prices must be indicated as gross amount, excluding VAT. The lowest offered price shall receive the highest score (110), others shall be calculated in relation to that in linear equation.

4.4 Selection of the suppliers

The final selection of the supplier will be based on the best price-quality ratio principle. The best price-quality ratio is established by weighing technical quality against price on a 70%/30% basis, i.e.

Total technical score: max. 110 (weight: 70%)

Total financial score: max. 110 (weight: 30 %)

Total score: max. ... (total technical score x 0,7 + total financial score x 0,3)

The winners shall be the one with the highest total score summed from technical and financial scores, and that candidate shall be proposed for the contract.

The successful and unsuccessful candidates will be informed in writing via email about the result of the award procedure.

An Evaluation Committee of External Evaluators containing at least 3 (three) members will be established. Each bid will be evaluated and ranked according to the criteria outlined in this RfP.

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.

In duly justified cases, however, no later than 1 (one) calendar day before the original deadline, the submission deadline can be extended.

Upon request from the tenderer concerned, EIT Manufacturing will as quickly as possible, and in any event within 15 (fifteen)

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

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.

4.5 Conflict of Interest and Evaluation Process Clause:

General Prohibition: All applicants are prohibited from engaging in any situation that may configure conflict of interest throughout the entire Request for Proposal (RfP) process.

Impartial Evaluation: Evaluators responsible for assessing the received proposals shall be external to the EITM to ensure impartiality and eliminate any potential bias. These external Evaluators will be appointed to objectively evaluate the proposals and select the most suitable candidate(s) based on merit and compliance with the RfP requirements.

Participation of EITM's Partners: The Partners of EIT Manufacturing are allowed to participate in the bid process, provided they adhere to the conflict of interest rules and instructions outlined by the European Institute of Technology – EIT (please see the Annotated Grant Agreement, rules of the MGA set out in Articles 6.1 and 6.2 and the specific rules for KIC Partners set out in Annex 5 of the [HE MGA](#)). This includes ensuring a clear separation of tasks implemented under a grant agreement and the provision of services. The entity/candidate should not engage in similar projects that may compromise the impartiality and fairness of the selection process.

Clear Division of Tasks: To be eligible to sign the contract for the provision of services with the EITM, the selected entity/candidate must demonstrate a clear division of tasks implemented as a sub-contractor or recipient of financial support. Compliance with the rules of sub-contracting or procurement is crucial for maintaining eligibility.

Contract Cancellation: Failure to adhere to the conflict-of-interest rules and instructions may result in the cancellation of the services contract between the parties involved.

4.6 Complaint procedure

Tenderers believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint. Appeals shall be addressed to EIT Manufacturing only via the following email address procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu. The tenderers have **5 (five) days** to file their complaints from the date of receipt of notification of the results.

In your application to EIT Manufacturing the complainant shall explain what procedural aspects they consider having been violated along with any recommendations or remarks. Such charges need to be supported with data and facts and, if possible, – documentation. An appeal whose sole purpose is to obtain a second evaluation for no reason other than that the complainant disagrees with the final award decision is to be rejected.

4.7 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.

In case of obvious or perceived errors or omissions in the RFP, Tenderers can request additional information or clarifications by the deadline provided in the above timeframe through email at procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu.

Upon receipt of the bids, they will be reviewed, and additional details will 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 2 (two) calendar days.

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 proposals as well as the contract may be submitted for audits.

4.8 Contract

The final award does not yet constitute the Contract. The Contract will be concluded at the time of signature by the Supplier and EIT Manufacturing. 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).

The invoicing will be based on schedule of payments provided in this RfP; it will be detailed in the contract. The contract that will have maximum duration of 1 (one) year and will be renewable based on the satisfactory achievement of the KPIs listed in this RfP by the selected supplier during its term.

The contract to be awarded through this RfP shall explicitly be understood as a service agreement for the provision of deliverables and shall not, under any circumstances, establish an employer-employee relationship. The parties involved acknowledge and agree that this contractual arrangement is solely for the purpose of delivering specified services and does not imply or create any form of employment relationship between the contracting parties. The obligations and responsibilities outlined in the contract are strictly limited to the scope of services and deliverables detailed in the RfP, and no employment benefits or rights are conferred or implied by the contractual agreement.

In the event of the need for replacement of the initially selected suppliers, the pre-selected applicants of this Request for Proposal (RfP) hereby acknowledge and agree that EIT Manufacturing reserves the right to contact them for potential engagement in the project. This communication may occur to assess their availability, interest, and ability to fulfill the requirements outlined in the RfP.

The tenderer agrees that the total value of the contract to be signed with EIT Manufacturing will in no way exceed the bid (the amount contained in the proposal) of the tenderer.

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.

4.9 Additional causes for cancellation of the proposal procedure

In the event of cancellation of the proposal procedure, EIT Manufacturing will notify candidates 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 candidate 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

Candidates 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' 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 tender, EIT Manufacturing may refrain from concluding the Contract.

This RfP confers no entitlement or expectation for tenderers to enter into a contract with EIT Manufacturing. Consequently, EIT Manufacturing is not obliged to sign a contract with the chosen supplier, whether at present or in the future.

Annexes List

- Annex 1 – Tenders Declaration of Honor
- Annex 2 – Detailed Proposal Template
- Annex 3 – Definitions of the Key Performance Indicators

Annex 1. Tenders Declaration of Honor

[Place and Date]

[Name of the Legal Entity and Signatory]

I, [Name of the legal representative authorized by the organization or/applicant], hereby declare the following in connection with my application for the Request for Proposal (RfP) seeking the appointment of an EIT Community Officer:

- I will commit to 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'). We will inform the EIT Manufacturing immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.
- I accept that during the implementation of the contract and for five years after the completion of the contract, the supplier must keep confidential any data, documents or other material that is identified as confidential at the time it is disclosed ('confidential information').

I accept that during the implementation of the contract and for five years after the completion of the contract, the EIT Manufacturing has the right for the purposes of safeguarding its financial interests, the proposal and the contract of the supplier may be transferred to internal as well as external audit services.

- I confirm that the entity represented by me is not currently experiencing any of the following situations. If any situation applies, details are provided in an annex to this declaration along with a brief explanation.
 - a) The entity is not bankrupt, subject to insolvency or winding up procedures, and its assets are not being administered by a liquidator or by a court. It is not in an arrangement with creditors, and its business activities are not suspended, nor is it in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national legislation or regulations.
 - b) There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing a breach of obligations related to the payment of taxes or social security contributions.
 - c) There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing guilt of grave professional misconduct, including but not limited to fraud, violation of applicable laws or regulations, ethical standards, distorting competition, violating intellectual property rights, attempting to influence EU Bodies' decision-making processes, attempting to obtain confidential information, or any other wrongful conduct impacting professional credibility.
 - d) There is no final judgement establishing guilt of fraud, corruption, participation in a criminal organization, money laundering or terrorist financing, terrorist-related offences, child labor, or other forms of trafficking in human beings.
 - e) The entity has not shown significant deficiencies in complying with the main obligations in the performance of a contract, a grant agreement, or a grant decision financed by the European Union's budget, leading to early termination, application of liquidated damages, or other contractual penalties, discovered through checks, audits, or investigations.
 - f) There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing that the entity has committed an irregularity within the meaning of Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2988/95.
 - g) There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing that the entity has created an entity in a different jurisdiction with the intent to circumvent fiscal, social, or any other legal obligations.

- In the absence of a final judgement or final administrative decision in the cases mentioned above, or in the case of point (e), I acknowledge that the Applicant may be subject to:
 - i) Facts established in the context of audits or investigations by EPPO, the Court of Auditors, OLAF, or the internal auditor, or any other check, audit, or control performed under the responsibility of the authorizing officer.
 - ii) Non-final administrative decisions, including disciplinary measures taken by the competent supervisory body responsible for the verification of the application of standards of professional ethics.
 - iii) Facts referred to in decisions of persons and entities implementing Union funds.
 - iv) Information transmitted in accordance with the Financial Regulation.
 - v) Decisions of the Commission or national competent authority relating to the infringement of Union or national competition law.

- I hereby declare the accuracy and truthfulness of the above statements.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature of authorized representative]

Annex 2. Detailed Proposal Template

Technical Part

A. General:

- A comprehensive CV of the candidate (natural person) or a full presentation of the legal entity applying to the RfP containing professional/commercial references.
- The information about the location (city) where the candidate will establish their physical space.
- The technical response to the services requested (see Section 2.2: 'Detailed scope of work⁹'). Technical description in detail of how the services described in the RFP will be provided by the candidate.
- Please, identify the 5 main gaps of the local innovation ecosystem in Bulgaria and prioritize them based on importance. How would you target them with your actions – please, propose adequate solution for the problems. (max. 1 page).
- Ideas of the candidate for the physical space of the ECO office - including a cost estimate and description of the office space: (max. 0,5 page)

Size (m2): Functions:

Category of the office building:

Where is the office located:

(Please note that the office should be located in one of the following cities for better access and proximity to the project's key stakeholders: Sofia, Plovdiv, Varna and Burgas).

Name of hosting institution (if applicable):

B. Targeting actions 2024:

An activity plan for the year of 2024¹⁰ with the following mandatory activities and taking into consideration the Indicative list of key performance indicators and minimum targets¹¹ (see Annex 3) for the EIT Community Officers has been submitted including:

- Mapping of local ecosystem and stakeholders
- Local event mapping
- Awareness raising activities (supporting the EIT Community awareness-raising events)
- Organizing info events (supporting the EIT Community information events and mapping the events of the local stakeholders which can be of interest for the EIT Community)
- Collecting information on local funding opportunities (and how to bring these to the attention to the local HubCommunity Members, EIT RIS Hubs and other EIT KIC Offices)

⁹ Detailed scope of work for the implementation of tasks proposed by the candidate, organization and methodology together with the Activity plan plus the narrative part cannot exceed 10 pages.

¹⁰ When composing the Activity for 2024 please, try to cover as many KPIs from Annex 5 as possible.

¹¹ Candidates are requested to propose KPI targets in their activity plan e.g. number of organized co-ordination meetings, EIT Community awareness-raising events, joint meetings for all KICS with regional/local/ national authorities, meetings with external stakeholders, etc. Final request of KPIs will be defined and agreed upon signature of contract.

- Updating the common platform (database accessible for the KICs on local calls, events, etc.)
- Additional activities proposed by the Candidate.

C. Targeting actions 2025:

As an additional narrative part to the submitted plan of 2024, a draft activity plan for the year of 2025 targeting the Key Performance indicators has to be submitted. The following points have to be targeted, accounting for a coherent continuation of the work carried out in 2024:

- Description on how the tenderer plans to co-ordinate the events, organize meetings, his/her capacity to co-ordinate the events and liaise with EIT RIS Hubs, stakeholders, etc. (max. 1 page)
- Description of the Candidate's plans to develop and establish good governance relationships with the EITCR Hubs and other stakeholders (max. 1 page)
- A short description on the local funding opportunities and how these can be funneled to the KICs' activities (max. 1 page)
- Description of the capacity of the candidate to provide extra services to RIS Hubs and other stakeholders.(max. 1 page)

Detailed Financial Plan

D. Financial Proposal

Setting out prices in accordance with the RFP specifications. (The financial offer must be presented in EUR. The price must be indicated excluding VAT).

A fixed price for the service: this price shall include all the costs pertaining to the provision of the requested service in particular:

- staff costs (specifying daily rate and proposed days of service; minimum 1600 hours yearly).
- travel, hotel, and subsistence costs.
- translation costs.
- and any other cost related to the service.
- other goods, works and services (€) including office related costs.

The detailed budget breakdown should include the cost of the physical space, which a detailed description is requested as part of the technical offer.

Suggestion for co-financing of the EIT Community Officer's activities / operation might also be included if there is any.

Budget template			
Cost		Cost category descriptions	EUR
(A) Personnel (€)			
(B) Incidental expenditure (€)			
Travel & subsistence (€)			

Office Space rental (€)			
Other goods, works and services (€) including office-related costs such as commodities, utilities, etc.			
	Total (A+B) (€)		

Annex 3. Definitions of the Key Performance Indicator

KPIs	Definition
EITECO01:	New regional EIT Community partners relevant to the KICs introduced* *in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no presence = no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)
EITECO02:	Cross-KIC matchmakings performed, namely active partners collaborating in the EIT Community, initially supported and/or referred by the ECO* *in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no presence = no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)
EITECO03:	Start-ups and scale-ups referred to EIT Community opportunities* *in established countries, the target will be achieved focusing in KICs which have NO PRESENCE in the country (no CLC, RIS Hub or dedicated KIC expert)
EITECO04:	Events, workshops, and meetings organised/facilitated by the ECO for the EIT Community members and the number of participants
EITECO05:	External events organised by national and/or regional authorities with the participation of the ECO and promotion of the EIT Community.
EITECO06:	Relevant key national events collected and communicated to the EIT Community Members, SRI Cluster and EIT KICs
EITECO07:	Media mentions of the EIT Community in local publications/news outlets facilitated by the ECO
EITECO08:	Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, SRI Cluster and EIT KICs
EITECO09:	External funding attracted from synergies/cooperation agreements identified/concluded by the ECO, contributing to the Financial Sustainability of the ECO, and the amount of funding attracted
EITECO010:	Local funding opportunities collected and communicated to the local EIT Community Members, EIT RIS Hubs and EIT KICs to implement projects jointly.