

Request for Proposal (RfP)

Lab to Market Programme

January 2026, France

Deadline for offer submission: 09 February, 23:59 (CEST)

1. Context

EIT Manufacturing (EITM) is one of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) established by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) with the mission to strengthen Europe's manufacturing ecosystem by connecting leading organisations across industry, academia, and research. Its purpose is to drive innovation, entrepreneurship, and education to ensure that European manufacturing remains competitive, sustainable, and resilient in the face of green and digital transitions.

EIT Manufacturing operates as a non-profit association under French Law 1901, created in 2019, with headquarters in Paris and a network of regional offices (Impact Centres) across Europe. Through its coordinated activities, EIT Manufacturing brings together more than 80 partners to foster collaboration, stimulate new ventures, and accelerate the commercialisation of innovative technologies.

As part of its 2026–2028 Business Plan, EIT Manufacturing will introduce a new initiative under the Innovation2Market (I2M) framework called **Lab to Market**. The programme will address a structural gap in the European innovation landscape: many promising research results developed in universities and Research and Technology Organisations (RTOs) fail to reach the market due to the lack of dedicated support mechanisms.

About the programme

Lab to Market is based on an open call for proposals, specifically targeting **universities and RTOs** holding intellectual property rights (IPR) with potential industrial applications in the manufacturing domain. For a duration of **8 months**, the programme will support these entities in valorising their IP, identifying viable market applications, validating their technologies with industrial users, and launching new spin-offs that can scale their innovations into impactful manufacturing solutions.

A key element of the programme is the integration of financial support and tailored services. Each selected applicant will receive a lump-sum grant of up to EUR 60,000 to perform technology validation activities—such as testing with potential adopters, market analysis, or early prototype improvements—depending on their specific needs. In parallel, each beneficiary will sign a Service Agreement with EIT Manufacturing to access a dedicated training and coaching programme focused on IP management, business creation, and market readiness.

The evaluation and selection of beneficiaries will be fully managed by EIT Manufacturing, following internal procedures aligned with Horizon Europe standards and involving external experts to ensure transparency

and fairness. The beneficiaries will be selected through an open Call for Proposals expected to launch in **Q1 2026**, targeting approximately **12 entities** for the first cohort. The activities, involving the 12 beneficiaries, are expected to start in Q3 2026.

EIT Manufacturing is now seeking a qualified supplier through this RfP to co-design and deliver the operational part of the Lab to Market programme. The supplier will be responsible for providing hands-on support to the selected beneficiaries through mentoring, training, and business creation activities, as detailed in the sections below. EIT Manufacturing will oversee strategic direction, beneficiary selection, contractual management and overall programme supervision.

The maximum budget for this RfP is 100,000 EUR, with a possible extension for one additional year.

2. Description of the Services

The selected supplier will act as operational partner to EIT Manufacturing, working under its supervision to provide end-to-end support to beneficiaries. The scope of work covers the entire value-generation chain, from identifying potential applicants and promoting the programme within its network, to delivering value-added Lab to Market services aimed at transforming research results into viable business opportunities.

As detailed in the next section, the services will be structured around two main phases:

1. **Co-Design and Scouting Phase** – focused on preparatory activities, collaboration with EIT Manufacturing in finalising the details of programme and actively promote it within its network to identify strong applicants.
2. **Programme Delivery Phase** – focused on the implementation of the Lab to Market services for the 10 selected beneficiaries.

While the Lab to Market programme will last eight months, the total contract duration of twelve months includes also the preparatory phase. Prior to the launch of the open call and while the call is open, the supplier will work closely with EIT Manufacturing to refine the programme's service offer, define templates and materials, and prepare for onboarding of the selected beneficiaries. The following eight months will be dedicated to the delivery of services of the programme, and the final month will be devoted to reporting and close-out activities.

Given the nature of the programme, the supplier must demonstrate **proven experience in designing and executing incubation, technology transfer, or venture-building programmes for research-based or IP-backed innovations**. Such experience should be supported by strong links with universities, RTOs, and innovation ecosystems across Europe.

While specific expertise in the manufacturing sector would be considered an asset — particularly in terms of access to relevant industrial networks — EIT Manufacturing will provide the strategic and sectoral guidance, ensuring the programme's alignment with manufacturing challenges and priorities.

The supplier is therefore expected to deliver professional-grade services, leveraging high-quality mentors and experts with strong backgrounds in IP management, entrepreneurship, and innovation support, while working in close coordination with EIT Manufacturing's network and industry partners.

3. Deliverables of the Services

While EIT Manufacturing is setting the expected outputs and mandatory KPI of the programme, the supplier is expected to bring its own methodology, expertise, and suggestions to optimise delivery and maximise programme results.

Below are indicative, high-level expected deliverables and a timeline of activities; the final structure shall be proposed by the supplier in its offer and refined during the co-design phase.

The selected supplier shall deliver the Lab to Market Programme in close collaboration with EIT Manufacturing, according to the framework, objectives, and timing described below.

The contract will have a total duration of **twelve (12) months**, including the preparatory and implementation phases. In particular:

a) Co-Design and Scouting Phase

This phase covers all preparatory activities supporting EIT Manufacturing up to the launch of the Call for Proposals and the dissemination of it. The supplier will work under EIT Manufacturing's supervision and in close coordination with its internal teams to ensure the programme's operational readiness and outreach.

Key deliverables include:

- Programme Co-Design and Preparation
 - Collaborate with EIT Manufacturing to finalise the detailed structure, delivery plan, and implementation methodology of the Lab to Market programme.
 - Contribute to the improving of the selection criteria for the Call for Proposals to help ensure that the process identifies projects with the highest innovation and commercialisation potential.
 - Prepare all operational and communication materials (training outlines, templates, onboarding documents, and mentor profiles) aligned with EIT Manufacturing's quality and branding guidelines.
- Scouting and Dissemination
 - Actively promote the Lab to Market Call for Proposals through the supplier's own networks and relevant European innovation ecosystems, ensuring outreach to universities and RTOs with strong potential in the manufacturing domain.
 - Identify potential applicants, supporting EIT Manufacturing in achieving a diverse and geographically balanced pool of high-quality proposals.
 - Deliver a Scouting and Dissemination Report summarising the actions carried out and their outcomes prior to the closing of the Call for Proposals.

b) Programme Delivery Phase

Following the selection and contracting of the beneficiaries by EIT Manufacturing, the supplier will deliver the Lab to Market programme over an eight-month period, providing tailored support to each participant.

Indicative timeline:

- **Months 1–2:** Onboarding and IP & market assessment
- **Months 3–4:** Training and business-creation coaching
- **Months 5–6:** Validation with early adopters
- **Months 7–8:** Finalisation and Demo Day

Expected deliverables include:

- Onboarding Session
 - Organise and facilitate a kick-off session at the start of the programme to introduce participants to the structure, objectives, mentors, and expectations
- IP Valorisation
 - Assess each beneficiary's IP position and preliminary commercialisation strategy.
 - Provide guidance on strengthening IP management and positioning for commercial success.
- Business Creation Coaching
 - Deliver tailored 1:1 coaching sessions on spin-off roadmap, business-model design, and go-to-market approach, based on the supplier's proven practices.
 - By M7, each beneficiary must have created a new legal entity. **This is a core KPI for each beneficiary of the programme.**
- IP and Business Training
 - Conduct collective and/or ad-hoc training sessions covering IP management, technology transfer, entrepreneurship, and business development, using interactive and practice-oriented formats.
- Technical Mentoring
 - Offer non-technology-specific guidance on prototyping, certification, and early industrial readiness to help teams progress toward validation with industry partners.
- Early Adopter Validation
 - Support the introduction of industry partners for validation purposes.
 - Facilitate the design and execution of first validation with potential industrial adopters.
- Demo Day Organisation
 - Organise a final Demo Day showcasing results and spin-off projects to corporates, SMEs, investors, and other stakeholders. **This is a core event to be delivered.**
 - Delivery a Demo Day Report summarising the event, attendance, and key outcomes.

Throughout the contract, the supplier shall provide regular updates to EIT Manufacturing.

Expected deliverables:

- Progress Reports at the end of M2, M4 and M6 of the Programme Delivery Phase, including quantitative and qualitative updates on each beneficiary's progress.
- Final Programme Report summarising activities, achievements and lessons learned.

- Continuous communication and coordination with EIT Manufacturing to ensure alignment and transparency.

The expected outcome and KPI of 2026 cohort of the programme are:

| Short title | Target |
|--|-------------|
| RTOs / universities scouted by the supplier and applied to the open call | At least 15 |
| Beneficiaries supported | 12 |
| Spin-offs created (EITHE04.1 KPI) | 12 |
| Early-adopter introductions for validation by the supplier | At least 15 |
| Manufacturing companies attending Demo Day | At least 40 |

4. Timeline

The indicative timeline is as follows:

| Activity | Responsible | Date |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
| RFP opening | EIT Manufacturing | 14 January, 2026 |
| Offer submission | Suppliers | 09 February, 2026 |
| Evaluation and notification of award | EIT Manufacturing | 17 February, 2026 |
| Standstill period for complaints | Supplier | 25 February, 2026 |
| Contract signature | EIT Manufacturing & selected suppliers | To be confirmed |
| Project start (Kick off meeting) | EIT Manufacturing & selected suppliers | 01 May, 2026 |

All offers shall be submitted within the above-mentioned deadline to the following link: [click here](#)

To start your application, please click on the link above and then click on "Apply now". Your email provider will be opened to send your application to procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu.

Then, please, fill in the fields with the description/data of the RfP you are applying for. Note that the

Requester's name and email should be your name and email.

After completing the information, upload your proposal in the "attachments" option at the bottom of the screen, and click "Submit Task" to finalize your application. Please notice that you will not receive any confirmation on your e-mail. However, you should ensure that this message appears to you on the screen after submitting your proposal: "Task created successfully".

If you have any questions, please contact us at the following email address:
procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu

5. Evaluation Criteria and Award Notification

Interested suppliers must submit a complete proposal in English, structured as a single document accompanied by any relevant annexes. Incomplete or late submissions will not be evaluated.

The proposal must include at least the following minimum information:

1. Proposed Approach and Work Plan/ Methodology

- Description of the most relevant selection criteria to be considered for the beneficiaries' selection
- Description of the methodology and delivery model proposed for the Lab to Market programme.
- Tentative timeline and structure of activities.
- Suggestions on how to optimise outreach, engagement and the quality of validation with industry.

2. Relevant Experience

- Evidence of previous experience in IP valorisation, spin-off support, venture building, or technology transfer programmes
- References to comparable contracts or projects, including client names, years, and outcomes achieved.

3. Company Profile

- General presentation of the organisation, including legal form, location, and years of activity.
- Overview of relevant areas of expertise and past collaborations with innovation actors, universities and RTOs.

4. Project Team

- List and short bios of the key individuals who will be actively involved in the programme (e.g. project manager, lead coaches, mentors, trainers).
- Indication of their role, specific expertise, and time commitment.

5. Budget and Financial Offer

- Detailed budget including breakdown of costs per activity and personnel.

Timely received proposals submitted by the tenderers will be examined, evaluated, and compared in accordance with the following criteria and the contracts shall be awarded to the highest ranked tenderers. The decision will be made according to the "Best Value for Money" principle having into account the following criteria and weight (in percentage):

- a) Quality and relevance of the proposed methodology (25%)
- b) Proven experience in delivering similar programmes (30%)
- c) Expertise of the delivery team and strength of the network (25%)
- d) Financial proposal (20%)

IMPORTANT: This tender is open to all entities established in the Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), and Horizon Europe Associate Countries.

An Evaluation Committee of at least 3 (three) people will be established and supervised by EITM. Each evaluation committee member evaluates the applications coming from their region. 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 tender and other 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 2 calendar days 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 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.

Complementary Note on the Evaluation Process:

After the initial evaluation of submitted proposals, it is possible that the potential top-ranked suppliers may be shortlisted for participation in a Pitch Session or in a set of interviews. It is important to emphasize that the evaluation will be conducted in strict accordance with the criteria outlined in the published Request for Proposal (RfP).

The primary objective of the Pitch Session or Interviews is to facilitate a deeper understanding of the received proposals, provide an opportunity to elaborate on specific details, and allow the EIT Manufacturing to get to know the team of professionals better. During this session, the shortlisted suppliers will have the chance to present their proposals, clarify any questions, and discuss how your firm can best meet the needs of EIT Manufacturing.

Further details regarding the Pitch Session or Interviews, including dates and logistics, will be communicated to the shortlisted suppliers following the initial evaluation of proposals.

Disclaimer of Liability for Technical Failures:

EIT Manufacturing shall not be held liable for any technical failures, interruptions, or glitches occurring in its digital tool designated for receiving proposals in the Request for Proposals (RfP) as mentioned in the link above, irrespective of the underlying reasons. EIT Manufacturing assumes no responsibility for any loss or damage resulting from such technical issues.

Verification of Proposal Receipt:

In case of any doubt or uncertainty regarding the submission status, the supplier is obligated to take appropriate measures to confirm the receipt of their proposal, utilizing the communication channels and tools made available by EIT Manufacturing for such verification. It is the sole responsibility of the supplier to verify the successful submission and receipt of their proposal through the available means provided by EIT Manufacturing.

By participating in the proposal submission process, the supplier acknowledges and accepts that EIT Manufacturing disclaims any liability related to technical failures affecting the digital tool and that the supplier is accountable for ensuring the successful transmission and receipt of their proposal.

6. Complaint procedure

Tenderers believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint respecting the mentioned deadline. 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.

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 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 3 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 offers as well as the contract may be submitted for audits.

8. Contract

The final award does not yet constitute the Contract.

The selected Supplier will be awarded a contract with a maximum value of 100,000 EUR.

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 a mutually agreed schedule; it will be detailed in the contract. The contract that will be awarded will have a maximum duration of **12 (twelve) months** with the possibility of renewal upon EITM's request for 2027 cohort of the programme. The tenderer agrees that the total value of the contract to be signed with EIT Manufacturing for 12 months will in no way exceed the bid (the amount contained in the offer) 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.

9. Confidentiality Obligation

All information, whether written or oral, exchanged between the parties involved in this Request for Proposals (RfP) process, hereinafter referred to as the "Parties" shall be considered confidential and proprietary.

The Parties agree not to disclose, provide access to, or otherwise make available any confidential information to any third parties, including but not limited to individuals, companies, or organizations, who are not directly involved in the RfP process, without the express written consent of the disclosing Party.

"Confidential Information" shall encompass, without limitation, all data, documents, proposals, discussions, designs, specifications, financial information, technical data, trade secrets, and any other information disclosed by one Party to the other during the course of the RfP process.

The obligations of confidentiality shall not apply to information that is:

- a) Publicly available at the time of disclosure or subsequently becomes publicly available through no fault of the receiving Party.
- b) Already in the possession of the receiving Party prior to disclosure and not subject to an existing confidentiality obligation.
- c) Disclosed to the receiving Party by a third party with the legal right to do so without breaching any confidentiality obligations.
- d) Required to be disclosed by law, court order, or governmental regulation, provided that the disclosing Party is promptly notified and given the opportunity to seek a protective order.

Any Party found in breach of this confidentiality clause shall be subject to legal measures, including but not limited to litigation, injunctive relief, and monetary damages, as deemed appropriate by the disclosing Party.

The obligations of confidentiality as set forth in this clause shall survive the termination or completion of the RfP process and shall remain in effect for a period of 5 (five) years, unless both Parties mutually agree in writing to terminate this confidentiality agreement.

This confidentiality clause shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of France. Any legal action arising out of or in connection with this clause shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of Paris, France.

10. 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 Core or Associate 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' 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.