

Request for Proposal (RfP)

Event agency for the HEI Initiative
Pilot Phase Conclusion (PPC) Event
November 29th, 2023

Deadline for offer submission extended to 13th December 2023

1. Context

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

EIT Manufacturing is an association under the law 1901 created in 2019. Along with the EIT Manufacturing there are 8 (eight) other KICs with the aim to lead the action and create services across Europe, improving the competitiveness of European companies.

EIT Manufacturing is seeking an event agency to support the creation and execution of the 2024 EIT HEI Initiative Pilot Phase Conclusion (PPC) Event. The cost provided in response to this RfP should include all costs of the event (excluding travel and accommodation of the attendees).

2. Event Background

This event serves as the primary annual gathering of EIT's HEI Initiative: Innovation Capacity Building for Higher Education. This initiative represents a collaborative effort within the EIT Community, coordinated by EIT RawMaterials. Its overarching goal is to provide support to higher education institutions (HEIs) by offering expertise, coaching, access to the EIT innovation ecosystem, and financial backing. Consequently, this initiative empowers HEIs to become regional catalysts for innovation, fostering sustainable growth and employment opportunities throughout Europe. To date, the EIT HEI Initiative has funded 49 projects, each with funding of up to 1.2 million euros, and 16 projects, each receiving up to 750,000 euros.

The HEI Initiative is nearing the conclusion of its pilot phase, which spanned from 2021 to 2024 and may potentially be succeeded by a full-scale phase continuing until 2027. In the years 2021, 2022, and 2023, a new cohort of projects was initiated annually. In 2024, no new project cohort is expected due to the pilot phase's closure and the potential launch of the post-pilot phase. Consequently, the initiative will culminate in a pilot phase conclusion event in June 2024.

EIT Manufacturing is responsible for coordinating this event, which will bring together members from the three cohorts of projects, EIT HEI Initiative staff, and external stakeholders with an interest in the initiative. The PPC





event is designed to foster a sense of community among the HEI Initiative projects, providing a structured environment in which selected HEI projects can engage in discussions and collaborations to enhance their project implementation. Institutional keynotes and presentations will offer insights and resources to address the challenges faced by consortia in their collective actions. Project participants are encouraged to maintain a broad perspective, enabling a collective reflection process to extract lessons that can be applied as the projects progress.

The primary objectives of the PPC Event are to establish communities within the HEI Initiative that will:

- Raise awareness among the European HEI community about the initiative and the unique opportunities it presents to HEIs across Europe to drive institutional change and create more innovative and entrepreneurial universities.
- Collaborate on addressing key action ideas and methods of implementation to promote innovation and entrepreneurship within HEIs.
- Share knowledge and best practice cases to reflect on the overall progress of the initiative and how projects will continue their work after the funding period concludes.
- Promote cross-KICs collaboration and facilitate a cross-KIC co-creation ecosystem where partner and non-partner HEIs work together to enhance their impact.

3. Description of the Services

In this RfP we seek a full-service event agency to be responsible for the execution of the annual in-person (invitation only) event of the EIT's HEI Initiative. The successful proposal will clearly demonstrate the agency's ability to deliver a high caliber event.

Event Details:

The 2024 HEI Initiative PPC Event will take place 4th, June 2024 with a reception the evening before, 3rd, June 2024. The event will bring together 250 representatives from across Europe in Brussels, Belgium.

EIT Manufacturing is looking for a full-service event agency to manage and oversee the creation and execution of the 2024 HEI Initiative PPC Event. The agency will be responsible for the event, working closely with organizers from EIT Manufacturing to organize, conceive, create and execute the 2024 HEI Initiative PPC Event. The agency will provide logistical and in-person support for event set-up and execution.

- Location: Brussels, Belgium.
- Dates: 3rd - 4th June 2024 (evening reception on June 3rd and full day event on June 4th, concluding with second evening reception on June 4th).
- Participants: 250 attendees from across Europe and Horizon Europe eligible countries (through invitation only).
- Catering: Reception with beverages and hors-d'oeuvres on June 3rd (18h00 – 20h00); Lunch on June 4th; Coffee service with snacks in the morning of June 4th; Coffee service and snacks in the afternoon of June 4th; Reception with beverages and hors-d'oeuvres on June 4th (18h00 -20h00).

4. Deliverables

The 2024 HEI Initiative PPC Event will have the following deliverables:

- Full project management plan including detailed deliverables execution plan from venue selection to event day execution with timeline.



- General immersion in project, introductions to team, alignment meetings, attendance at the event planning meetings and the event itself.
- Assistance in event content creation and delivery, including:
 - (i) full production briefs for speakers, participants.
 - (ii) Content curation; workshop talent, delivery, flow.
 - (iii) Coordinate movement and flow of attendees.
- Support in the planning of the 2024 PPC Event especially in relation to the breakout sessions (logistics and flow).
- Logistic support on-site & final setup.
- General assistance in the administrative items associated with the planning of the event especially in relation to:
 - (i) Registration platform.
 - (ii) Management of registrants.
 - (iii) Management of attendees.
 - (iv) Ongoing admin support: emails, meetings, finalizing details.
 - (v) Selection, communicating (liaison) and site visits with vendors (venue, catering (2 coffee services, 2 receptions with beverages and lite food fare, 1 full lunch), printing, communications, transportation, hotel, AV services) in regard to various needs (e.g. room set up, AV needs, lunches, food and coffee service, printouts, etc.).
 - (vi) Contracting and coordination of the event photographer and videographer.
 - (vii) Printing of all needed materials of the event – including 65 A0-sized posters (one from each project), instructions and work material for breakout sessions.
 - (viii) Coordination and receiving of materials of event (shipped materials such as roll ups and other items for event and transport to the location).
- Producing and ordering of the following items (nonexclusive list):
 - (i) Name tags.
 - (ii) Agendas.
 - (iii) Break out room attendees (participants per room).
 - (iv) On-site event signage (e.g. registration here).
 - (v) Production of an overview video of the event and 3-5 interview videos (approximately 2-3 minutes with footage from the different segments of the event and interviews of attendees).
 - (vi) Digital photography of the event.

5. Timeline

The deadline to submit the offer is extended until **13/12/2023**. The indicative timeline for the call for proposals is as follows:

Activity	Responsible	Date
RFP opening	EIT Manufacturing	14/11/2023
RfP deadline extension	EIT Manufacturing	29/11/2023
Offer submission	Supplier	13/12/2023
Evaluation and notification of award	EIT Manufacturing	15/12/2023
Estimated date of Contract signature (<i>contingent upon funding and obtaining project approval from the EIT</i>)*	EIT Manufacturing & selected supplier	22/12/2023



* As stipulated in this RfP, the contract signature is contingent upon funding and obtaining project approval from the EIT. Consequently, EIT Manufacturing bears no obligation to engage the selected supplier for the contract.

All offers shall be submitted within the above-mentioned deadline to the following email: procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu

6. Financial proposal

The maximum amount of this offer cannot exceed **145.000,00 EUR** net of VAT and a clear financial breakdown (in .xls format) should be sent to EIT Manufacturing containing the following information:

- a. Item descriptions
- b. Quantity of items
- c. Item cost
- d. Total cost
- e. Comments/explanations

All costs should be submitted net of VAT.

Selected supplier must ensure that EIT Manufacturing procurement procedure has been followed prior to selecting third party suppliers (in majority of cases this will imply scouting for two/three proposals) as well as following the general principles and orientations of EIT Manufacturing Procurement Policy such as Best value for money, Transparency, Non-discrimination, Equal Treatment, Competition, Proportionality and, No conflict of Interest. Specific rules and instructions on this topic must be transmitted by the Project Lead and the Procurement Officer on EIT Manufacturing.

Costs of Production/Services with subcontracting parties should be borne by EIT Manufacturing unless agreed differently in a later stage with the supplier.

7. Evaluation Criteria and Award Notification

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

- a) Agency’s capacity to provide logistical and administrative support for all aspects of the event.
- b) Agency’s capacity to provide in-person support at the event.
- c) Agency’s capacity to coordinate local vendors.
- d) Agency’s open, approachable attitude to join the team for the planning an execution of the event, effectively integrating in the HEI Initiative and EIT Manufacturing teams.

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

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



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

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 legal consulting 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.

8. 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.



9. 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 3 day(s).

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.

10. 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 a mutually agreed schedule; it will be detailed in the contract. The contract is estimated to be signed by June 2024, before the event, and will have a maximum duration of 6 (six) months with amendments being permitted, by mutual agreement between the parties.

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

The payments will be performed by EIT Manufacturing to the Supplier as follows: (i) 25% upon completion of the contract, and (ii) 75% upon the delivery of the services.

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.



11. 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.

12. 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'). The tenderer should inform the EIT Manufacturing team immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.



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

Tenderers will be excluded if:

- a. they are being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations; they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata.
- b. they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the EIT Manufacturing can justify.
- c. they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or any other country of the EU.
- d. they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organization or any other illegal activity detrimental to the EU' 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. Tenderers are also expected to acknowledge that the provision of services is contingent upon EIT funding and approval.