

# Request for Proposal (RfP)

Strategic Support for EU Projects and Initiatives in Advanced Manufacturing  
for 2025  
January 2025

**Deadline for offer submission: 21 January 2025**

## 1. Context

EIT Manufacturing is one of the EIT Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC) focused on promoting entrepreneurship, innovation, and education in the domain of manufacturing. EIT Manufacturing brings together leading organisations along the entire value chain from smaller companies to larger industry, excellent academic and research institutions, as well as public sector organisations, to promote the transformation of manufacturing towards a sustainable, people-centric, resilient European 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 Knowledge Innovation Communities (“KICs”) with the aim to lead the action and create services across Europe, improving the competitiveness of European companies.

Through this **Request for Proposals (RfP)**, EIT Manufacturing (EITM) seeks to identify an **individual or organization** with the expertise and capacity to support its EU Projects and Strategic Initiatives Unit in achieving its 2025 objectives. The selected partner will play a pivotal role in the development and submission of high-quality proposals targeting EU funding programs such as I3, Horizon Europe, and Erasmus+, with the aim of securing at least €1 million in project funding. This partnership will also focus on enhancing EITM's strategic engagement by ensuring its active participation in competitive funding opportunities, maximizing its visibility and impact, and reinforcing its commitment to sustainability, innovation, and workforce development in manufacturing. The successful candidate will be expected to demonstrate a proven track record in EU funding, advanced manufacturing, capacity building, and dissemination strategies, ensuring the delivery of impactful, strategically aligned projects that drive progress across EITM's priority areas.

## 2. Work Scope & Deliverables

The selected individual or organization will support the EU Projects and Strategic Initiatives Unit at EIT Manufacturing in achieving the following goals by the end of 2025:

### A. Proposal Development and Submission

- Develop and submit at least 10 competitive proposals in 2025, ensuring EIT Manufacturing plays leading or key roles.
- Target funding programs such as I3, Horizon Europe, and Erasmus+, aligning proposals with EIT Manufacturing's strategic priorities and quality standards.
- Secure funding for at least 3 proposals, achieving a combined minimum total of €1 million in grants.

### B. Strategic Engagement

- Advocate for EIT Manufacturing's inclusion as a key partner in EU proposals, securing a minimum annual allocation of €70,000 in grants.
- Maintain strategic balance by participating in one proposal per relevant call topic.
- Strengthen EIT Manufacturing's positioning in sustainability, innovation, and workforce development within the manufacturing sector

## 3. Eligibility Criteria / Required Expertise

To successfully fulfil the responsibilities outlined in this RFP, the individual or organization must demonstrate the following expertise:

- **EU Funding Programs:** Proven track record with at least 15 years of experience in developing successful proposals under I3, Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, or similar EU funding programs.
- **Proposal Writing and Coordination:** A minimum of 15 years of extensive experience in coordinating multi-partner initiatives and delivering high-quality, competitive proposals.
- **Manufacturing Expertise:** Comprehensive understanding of advanced manufacturing technologies, including robotics, AI, and sustainability practices.
- **Capacity Building:** Demonstrated expertise in developing and implementing upskilling and reskilling strategies for the manufacturing workforce.

## 4. Budget

The budget for this project is **EUR 30 000** (excluding VAT).

## 5. Timeline

The deadline to submit the offer is **21 January 2025**. The indicative timeline for the Request for Proposals is as follows:

Activity	Responsible	Date
RFP Opening	EIT Manufacturing	14 January 2025
<b>Submission of Proposals</b>	<b>Suppliers</b>	<b>21 January 2025</b>
Evaluation and notification of award	EIT Manufacturing	27 January 2025
End of the Standstill	EIT Manufacturing	30 January 2025
Contract Signature	EIT Manufacturing/Suppliers	5 February 2025

## 6. Proposal Submission Procedure

All offers shall be submitted within the above-mentioned deadline to the following link: <https://eit-manufacturing.prioritize.linksquares.com/new-task?token=eqfghK7TdycO3ZdVaPfVqgS5gx2LiEf2ImaueYxnGfUzCJhpKHMNjUwW1oN-KF7i>

To start your application, please follow the outlined “step-by-step”:

1. Click on the link above and then click on “Procurement - Make a request for the Legal Team related to Procurement Procedures”.
2. Fill out the Task Name with this description: “RfP - Strategic Support for EU Projects and Initiatives in Advanced Manufacturing for 2025”.
3. Fill out the Requestor Name with your name.
4. Fill out the Requestor E-mail with your e-mail address.
5. Leave the following fields blank since they are not mandatory: Task type, Deadline and Priority.
6. Fill in the field “Describe Task” with the message you wish to convey to our team and/or any details and comments you have regarding your proposal. If you have none, simply write the name of the RfP: “RfP - Strategic Support for EU Projects and Initiatives in Advanced Manufacturing for 2025”.
7. Click on attachments and upload your Commercial Proposal as an attachment.
8. After completing the above-mentioned information, click on “Submit Task” to finalise your application. Please note that you will not receive any confirmation in your e-mail. However, you should ensure that this message appears to you on the screen after submitting your proposal: “Task created successfully”.
9. If you have any questions, please contact us at the following email address: [procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu)

#### 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.

## 7. Evaluation of Proposals

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. The award criteria will be the following:

#### **Selection criteria:**

1. Relevant Experience and Expertise (30%)
  - Track record in successful EU funding proposals (I3, Horizon Europe, Erasmus+).
  - Expertise in manufacturing, robotics, AI, sustainability, and capacity building.
  - Experience in multi-partner project coordination and dissemination strategies.
2. Quality of Proposed Approach (30%)
  - Clear methodology for meeting the work scope and deliverables.
  - Alignment with EIT Manufacturing’s priorities and EU funding requirements.
  - Strong strategies for cascade funding, CSAs, and upskilling initiatives.
3. Cost Effectiveness (15%)
  - Efficient use of the €30,000 budget with clear cost justification.
  - Value-for-money demonstrated through resource allocation.
4. Communication and Collaboration Capabilities (15%)
  - Strong communication and stakeholder management skills.
  - Ability to manage multi-partner collaborations effectively.
5. Innovation and Strategic Vision (10%)

- Innovative solutions aligned with sustainability, workforce development, and manufacturing challenges.
- Strategic positioning to enhance EIT Manufacturing's leadership and impact.

An Evaluation Committee of at least 3 (three) people will be established and supervised by EIT Manufacturing. 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 into 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.

The 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 emphasise 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.

## 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 deadline mentioned. Appeals shall be addressed to EIT Manufacturing only via the following email address [procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto:procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu). The tenderers have **3 (three) days** to file their complaints from the date of receipt of notification of the results.

In their 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 organise as many rounds of negotiation as it is needed during the procedure 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 conferences or even live negotiations can be organised. EIT Manufacturing also reserves the right to invite the tenderers to an individual meeting before the final award of the contract to clarify details and ambiguities.

In case of obvious or perceived errors or omissions in the request for proposals, Tenderers can request additional information or clarifications by the deadline provided in the above time frame through email at [procurement@eitmanufacturing.eu](mailto: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 and 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 three (3) days.

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

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

## 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 a mutually agreed schedule; it will be detailed in the contract. The contract is estimated to be signed by December 2024 and will have a maximum duration of **12 (twelve) months**.

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 awarded supplier will be asked to sign Standard Contractual Clauses (SCC) if no other GDPR compliant safeguards exist, and the supplier is 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 organisations, 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 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 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 an 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 organisation 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.

## ANNEX I - Tenders Declaration of Honor

[Place and Date]

[Name of the Legal Entity and/or Signatory]

**I, [Full name of the supplier's representative], hereby declare the following in connection with my application for the Request for Proposal (RfP) [title of the RfP]:**

- a) 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'). I will inform the EIT Manufacturing immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.
- b) 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').
- c) 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 offer and the contract of the supplier may be transferred to internal as well as external audit services.
- d) I confirm that I or 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.
  - 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.
  - There is no final judgement or final administrative decision establishing a breach of obligations related to the payment of taxes or social security contributions.
  - 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.

- 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.
- 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 (d), 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 the Supplier's representative]