Request for proposal:

Academy Quality Assurance and Certification Expert

1. Overview

1.1. EU Raw Materials Academy

The **European Raw Materials Academy (ERMAcademy)** and the **European Advance Materials Academy (AdMatAcademy)** are flagship initiatives funded by the European Commission to support the upskilling and reskilling of Europe's raw and advanced materials workforces. In response to growing demands for sustainability, digitalisation, and industrial resilience, the Academy aims to close critical skills gaps across the entire materials value chain — from exploration and processing to recycling and circularity, and substitution using advanced materials. Designed to serve professionals, SMEs, large enterprises, and public authorities alike, the Academy projects will offer a portfolio of high-quality, future-oriented learning programmes aligned with evolving labour market needs and EU policy priorities, such as the Critical Raw Materials Act, the Pact for Skills, the Net Zero Industry Act, and the Green Deal Industrial Plan.

1.2. EIT Raw Materials

EIT RawMaterials is a 'Knowledge and Innovation Community' (KIC) created by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT), aimed at promoting innovation in the raw materials sector across Europe. Established in 2015, EIT RawMaterials works to secure the sustainable supply of raw materials to the European industry by driving innovation, education, and entrepreneurship along the entire raw materials value chain.

We are a knowledge-driven business and a catalyst for industrial progress. Our offerings leverage our expertise and that of our network – the world's largest network in the raw [and advanced] materials sector – which includes companies at every stage of evolution, from start-ups to market leaders, along with leading international universities, research organisations, and top experts and future talent from the sector.

Our activities span from mining and mineral processing to material recycling and substitution, focusing on increasing resource efficiency and fostering a circular economy.

We inform policy, apply knowledge, accelerate innovation, create opportunity, and unlock commercial value – for our partners and customers throughout the raw materials value chain to develop the raw materials sector as a strategic strength and foundation for a secure, sustainable future for Europe.

Our offerings are designed to help our partners and industry to be part of Europe's strategic agenda to ensure supply chain security and make the 'Green New Deal' a reality that benefits the people of Europe and partner nations.

For more information about our company please visit the following website:

https://eitrawmaterials.eu/

2. Scope of work

2.1. Objectives of the Assignment

EIT RawMaterials seeks to procure an experienced Quality Assurance and Certification Expert as a freelance subcontractor to support the EU Raw Materials Academy and EU Advanced Materials Academy. The subcontractor will coordinate with the internal QA and Certification Manager (FTE) and the relevant Academy Team representatives for the purposes of alignment on deliverables and timelines.

The primary objective of this assignment is to support the design, implementation, and operationalisation of a unified, robust, and scalable quality management, certification, and credentialing system across the Academies' education portfolio. This system is intended to:

- Ensure consistent quality standards across all Academy programs

- Enable external recognition, certification, and audit readiness

- Mitigate regulatory, reputational, and operational risks

- Support portfolio growth without fragmentation or dilution of standards

The quality system applies across:

- Newly developed Academy courses

- Existing courses integrated into the Academies' portfolios

- Third-party learning content and training partnerships

The subcontractor will contribute hands-on expertise to ensure that all Academy programmes meet agreed internal quality standards, align with European and international frameworks, and are prepared for external recognition, certification, and audit processes. While implementation approaches may differ by course type or provider, the same core quality principles, standards, and review logic apply across the entire portfolio.

2.2. Scope of Services

The subcontractor is expected to provide expert services across the following interconnected areas. The scope may be adjusted over time by mutual written agreement via a change request triggered by evolving Academy priorities, provided it remains aligned with the deliverables and acceptance criteria set out below, based on Academy priorities but will remain aligned with the agreed work packages, deliverables, timelines, and acceptance criteria set out below.

For planning and costing purposes only, tenderers shall assume an indicative level of effort of 80-120 hours per month on average. This engagement is non-exclusive, and the contractor remains free to

provide services to other clients while meeting the agreed deliverables and timelines.

The maximum contract value must be below 216,000 EUR net. The contract is intended to run for and should be calculated to conclude within approximately a 3 to 3.5-year period, ending no later than July 2029. Tenderers should take these parameters into account when calculating hourly/daily/monthly rates. Any extension beyond the stated end date would require a separate procurement procedure.

2.2.1. Quality Assurance Framework Implementation

- Support the implementation and continuous refinement of a unified quality assurance (QA) system for Academy education programmes, in coordination with the QA and Certification Manager as the designated point of contact for prioritisation and acceptance.
- Translate high-level QA frameworks into practical, operational tools (guidelines, templates, checklists, workflows) usable by internal teams and external course providers.
- Support alignment of Academy QA processes with relevant European and international frameworks, such as ESG, EQAVET, and ISO standards, , while ensuring that Academy-defined quality standards remain the primary reference for operational decisions.
- Define and monitor the documentation of QA indicators, performance metrics, and continuous improvement cycles.
- Support internal quality reviews, audits, and evaluations of courses and providers, including follow-up actions where quality thresholds are not met.

2.2.2. Course Certification and External Recognition Support

- Support for course-level and institutional certification, accreditation, and regulatory approval processes by preparing defined deliverables (e.g. application dossiers, evidence packages, audit preparation materials) as agreed.
- Assist in preparing documentation, evidence packages, and audit materials required by external bodies (e.g. national regulators, accreditation agencies, certification bodies).
- Support certification cycles including initial approvals, renewals, corrective actions, and follow-up audits through agreed work package, each concluding with defined deliverables.
- Contribute to coordination with third-party training providers with agreed work packages to ensure their courses meet Academy QA and certification requirements.

2.2.3. Credentialing and Learning Outcomes Alignment

- Support the implementation of the Academy's credentialing architecture across courses, in coordination with the QA and Certification Manager.
- Assist with the alignment of learning outcomes, assessment methods, and credentials to European frameworks such as:
  - European Qualifications Framework (EQF)
  - European Learning Model (ELM)
  - Europass and European Digital Credentials for Learning
  - EU Council Recommendation on Micro-credentials
- Support the operational rollout of certificates, micro-credentials, or digital badges, including documentation and verification processes.

2.2.4. Compliance Documentation

- Support the integration of regulatory and standards compliance requirements into course and programme workflows, including GDPR, accessibility requirements, and ethical/transparent

use of AI in education.
- Contribute to the development and updating (as needed) of auditable QA and certification documentation, policies, and records.
- Support preparation for audits by providing audit readiness checks and recommendations for the relevant audit circle.

2.2.5. Stakeholder Support and Capacity Building

- Provide guidance to internal teams, course developers, and external training partners on QA, assessment, and certification requirements through structured review, workshops, briefings and written guidance.
- Support onboarding of third-party learning content providers into the Academy QA system by providing templates, checklists and documented recommendations.
- Contribute to training sessions, briefings, or written guidance to ensure consistent understanding and application of QA standards across the portfolio.

2.2.6. Monitoring and Reporting

- Support tracking by providing inputs to QA and certification-related KPIs, such as:
  - Number of courses reviewed and approved
  - Number of certified or externally recognised programmes
  - Audit findings and follow-up actions
  - Credential issuance readiness
- Contribute to ensuring that monitoring outputs inform quality reviews, corrective measures, and continuous improvement decisions.
- Contribute input to internal governance reporting and project reporting obligations for the Academies.

2.3. Deliverables

Indicative deliverables may include (non-exhaustive):
- QA process documentation, templates, and operational tools
- Course review and audit reports
- Certification and accreditation support materials
- Credentialing alignment documentation for selected courses
- Compliance and audit readiness documentation
- Summary reports on QA and certification activities

Deliverables will be agreed on a rolling basis via documented work packages (scope, timeline, acceptance criteria) with the QA and Certification Manager.

2.4. Required Expertise and Profile

Tenderers should demonstrate:
- Proven expertise in quality assurance and certification in higher education, professional education, or lifelong learning contexts.
- Practical experience implementing QA systems across multiple courses, providers, or institutions.
- Familiarity with European and international QA and credentialing frameworks (e.g. ESG, EQAVET, EQF, micro-credentials).
- Experience supporting certification, accreditation, or regulatory approval processes.
- Strong ability to translate standards and frameworks into practical, operational solutions.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English.

Experience working with EU-funded education initiatives, multi-stakeholder environments, or digital/online learning formats is considered an asset.

2.5. Contractual Setup and Working Modality

- The subcontractor will be engaged as an independent freelancer or legal entity.
- The assignment is expected to run on a part-time, flexible basis, with workload varying according to Academy development and certification cycles based on agreed work packages and priorities.
- The subcontractor will work in close coordination with the internal QA and Certification Manager (FTE) to agreed deliverables, timelines and acceptance criteria.
- All work must comply with EIT RawMaterials policies, confidentiality requirements, and applicable EU regulations.
- Services will be performed with full professional and organisational independence, using the Contractor's own tools and methods, with flexibility in the choice of working time and place, provided that agreed deliverables and milestones are achieved as scheduled
- The delivery of services will not involve any integration into the Client's organisational structure, and no employment-like instructions will be issued; participation in internal routines will occur only where strictly necessary to complete agreed work packages.

3. Proposal Process

3.1. Participation

Participation in this proposal procedure is open to all tenderers.

Tenderers are requested to submit a single proposal package clearly structured according to the sections outlined below. The proposal must enable EIT RawMaterials to assess the tenderer's technical suitability, relevant experience, and financial offer in a transparent and comparable manner.

Proposals should be concise, clearly written in English, and focused on the services requested under Section 2 of this RfP.

All participants must sign the Tenderers' declaration form attached and submit it with the proposal. Please note that the tenderer may not modify the text, it must be submitted signed as provided by EIT RawMaterials attached to this request for proposal document.

3.2. Technical Proposal

The technical proposal should demonstrate the tenderer's understanding of the assignment and their ability to deliver the required services. At a minimum, it should include the following elements

3.2.1. Understanding of the Assignment

- A brief description of the tenderer's understanding of the objectives, scope, and context of the assignment.
- A short explanation of how the proposed services will support the implementation of a unified and standardised quality assurance, certification, and credentialing system across the Academies.

3.2.2. Proposed Approach and Methodology

- Description of the proposed approach to delivering the services outlined in Section 2, including:
  - Implementation and operationalisation of QA frameworks

- o Support to certification, accreditation, and regulatory processes
- o Credentialing and learning outcomes alignment
- o Compliance and documentation support
- Description of how the tenderer would work in coordination with the internal QA and Certification Manager (FTE) and other Academy stakeholders.
- Tools, methods, or working practices used to ensure consistency, traceability, and continuous improvement.

3.2.3. *Work Plan and Availability*
- An indicative work plan outlining how the services would be delivered over time (e.g. phases, activities, milestones).
- Estimated availability and capacity (e.g. days per month or year) linked to agreed work packages and deliverables, with flexibility assumptions clearly stated.
- Description of how workload fluctuations linked to audits, certification cycles, or course development phases would be managed.

3.2.4. *Relevant Experience and Expertise*
- Description of relevant professional experience in quality assurance, certification, accreditation, or credentialing in higher education or professional training.
- Demonstrated experience with European and/or international frameworks (e.g. ESG, EQAVET, EQF, micro-credentials, ISO, accreditation or regulatory bodies).
- Experience delivering quality assurance and/or certification services for similar initiatives, especially net-zero Academies or training programs within the EIT or similar EU Training ecosystems is ideal and would be considered highly advantageous.
- Experience working across multiple institutions, partners, or training providers is considered an asset.

3.2.5. *Key Personnel*
- CV(s) of the proposed expert(s) who would deliver the services.
- Clear indication of the role and level of involvement of each proposed expert.
- Subcontractors (if any) act solely under the Contractor's responsibility and control. Engagement is for defined deliverables (with acceptance), not staff leasing. AÜG is excluded; no integration into the Client's organization and no work-related instructions by the Client. Contractor binds all subcontractors back-to-back.

3.3. *Evidence and References*
Tenderers should provide evidence supporting their technical proposal, which may include:
- References to QA systems, certification processes, or credentialing frameworks previously implemented or supported.
- Client references or testimonials (contact details may be requested at a later stage).
- Short case studies or examples of comparable assignments delivered in the past.
All evidence should be directly relevant to the scope described in Section 2.

3.4. *Financial Proposal*
The financial proposal must be submitted with the technical proposal and should include:
- A clear pricing structure, expressed in EUR, indicating:
  - o Daily or hourly rates (as applicable)
  - o Any different rates for different profiles, if relevant

- An indicative total cost estimate below 216,000 EUR based on agreed work packages and deliverables.
- Clear indication of whether prices are net amounts and the applicable VAT.
- Any assumptions, exclusions, or conditions that may affect pricing.

Pricing should be transparent and allow EIT RawMaterials to understand how costs scale with workload over time through agreed work packages and deliverables.

3.5. Submission Format

- Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format.

- All documents must be clearly labelled and referenced to this RfP.

Failure to provide the required information may result in exclusion from the evaluation process.

3.6. Submission of proposal

EVENT	DATE (End of Business)
Publishing the RFP on EIT RawMaterials website	3rd February 2026
Deadline for requesting clarification from EIT RawMaterials	13th February 2026
Deadline for submitting proposals	20th February 2026
Intended date of notification of award (earlier date possible)	2nd March 2026
Intended date of contract signature (earlier date possible)	13th March 2026

Proposals must be emailed in English to the following address:

Contact name: for the attention of Benjamin Maloney
E-mail: benjamin.maloney@eitrawmaterials.eu

The proposal shall contain:
- Tender concept as technical response to the requested services including deliverables, milestones and acceptance criteria where applicable (section 2)
- the financial offer (the price for the services.) The financial offer must be presented in Euro. Prices must be indicated as net amount + VAT. Tenderers shall provide the applicable daily rate and an indicative price by work package. For evaluation purposes the net total amount (excl. VAT) will be used.
- Information on GDPR compliance.
- an indication of supplier's insurance coverage. The proposal must specify whether the supplier
  o has taken out a company liability insurance and/or professional liability insurance including the maximum amount of coverage in Euro per event per insurance.

-    Tenderers' declaration form.

Proposals must be concise and clear. The tenderer's proposal will be incorporated into any contract that results from this procedure. Tenderers are, therefore, cautioned not to make claims or statements that they are not prepared to commit to contractually. Subsequent modifications and counterproposals shall, if applicable, also become an integral part of any resulting contract.

The tenderer represents that the individual submitting the natural or legal entity's proposal is duly authorized to bind its entity to the proposal as submitted. The tenderer also affirms that it has read the instructions to tenderers in this RfP document and that it has the experience, skills and resources to perform, according to conditions set forth in this proposal and the tenderers' proposal.

3.7.   Requests for additional information or clarification

In case the tenderers are in need of additional information or clarification, please address it to the address below. All information requested or answered may only be done through written communication – email only. All questions should be sent prior to the deadline for requesting clarification as specified in section 2.2.

Contact name: for the attention of Benjamin Maloney
E-mail: benjamin.maloney@eitrawmaterials.eu

3.8.   Validity of the proposals

Tenderers are bound by their proposals 90 days after the deadline for submitting proposals.

3.9.   Costs for preparing proposals

No costs incurred by the tenderer in preparing and submitting the proposal are reimbursable. All such costs must be borne by the tenderer.

3.10.   Ownership of the proposals

EIT RawMaterials retains ownership of all proposals received under this procedure. Proprietary information identified as such, which is submitted by tenderers in connection with this procurement, will be kept confidential.

The potential or actual supplier should accept that during the implementation of the contract and for four years after the completion of the contract, for the purposes of safeguarding the EU's financial interests, EIT RawMaterials may transfer the proposal and the contract of the supplier to internal audit services, to the European Court of Auditors, to the Financial Irregularities Panel or to the European Anti-Fraud Office.

3.11.   Clarification related to the submitted proposals

After submission, proposals shall be reviewed for compliance with formal requirements as set forth in

this RfP document. Where information or documentation submitted by the tenderers are or appears to be incomplete or erroneous or where specific documents are missing, EIT RawMaterials may request the tenderer concerned to submit, supplement, clarify or complete the relevant information or documentation within an appropriate time limit. All information requested or answered may only be done through written communication – email only.

3.12.   Negotiation about the submitted proposal

After reviewing the formal compliance of the tenders, EIT RawMaterials may negotiate the contract terms with the tenderers. In this negotiation EIT RawMaterials will request all tenderers to adjust the proposal or specific sections of the proposal within an appropriate time limit. In case of negotiations, EIT RawMaterials shall provide further information about the proceedings and timing.

3.13.   Open Competition

The EU Raw Materials Academy serves the skills needs of the entire EU Raw Materials industry. To this end, this is an open procurement call to all entities, and therefore, applicants are not required to be partners of the EIT RawMaterials KIC membership network. Furthermore, no preference will be given to EIT RawMaterials members and proposals will be evaluated solely on the merits of the applying entities and their proposed project plans.

3.14.   Evaluation of proposals

Each proposal will be evaluated in accordance with the below mentioned award criteria. The award criteria will be applied in accordance with the requested services indicated in section 2 of this RfP document.

Technical criteria	Points
- Technical Specifications (section 2) - Individual experience of the proposed team - Comprehensiveness of proposed results - Feasibility of the proposed implementation and its details	20 20 15 20
Total score for technical criteria	75
Financial criterion	
Lowest offered price shall receive the highest score, others shall be calculated in relation to that in linear equation	25
Total score for financial criterion	25
Total maximum score	100

3.15. Signature of contract

The successful and unsuccessful tenderers will be informed in writing (via email) about the result of the procedure.

3.16. Appeals/complaints

Tenderers believing that they have been harmed by an error or irregularity during the tender procedure may file a complaint. Appeals should be addressed to EIT RawMaterials. EIT RawMaterials is only able to address complaints before the contract is awarded to the successful tenderer.

3.17. Cancellation of the procedure

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

In the event of cancellation of the procedure, EIT RawMaterials will notify the tenderers of the cancellation. In no event shall EIT RawMaterials be liable for whatsoever, including, without limitation, damages for loss of profits, in any way connected to the cancellation of the procedure.

3.18. Ethics clauses / Corruptive practices

The supplier 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 supplier should inform EIT RawMaterials immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the tasks.

Furthermore, the supplier acknowledges and accepts the Code of Conduct of EIT RawMaterials which can be downloaded via www.eitrawmetarials.eu

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Annexes

Annex 1: Tenderers' Declaration form (available on RfP page of website:)