REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) CONSULTANCY SERVICES TO DEVELOP CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING SCHEMES FOR THE GOOD RESEARCH MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (GRMP) STANDARD-ARS 1054:2025.

RFP Clarifications and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Document

This Addendum forms an integral part of the Request for Proposals and shall be read in conjunction with the RFP

ASSIGNMENT #1: DEVELOPMENT OF A CERTIFICATION SCHEME FOR THE GOOD RESEARCH MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (GRMP) STANDARD – ARS 1054:2025

1. What are the objectives of this assignment?

The objective of this assignment is to design and validate a robust and internationally credible GRMP Certification Scheme that enables consistent, impartial, and high-quality certification of organizations as a proof of compliance to the requirements of GRMP standard. This will be achieved through stakeholder-validated scheme design, strong governance and oversight mechanisms, and the establishment of competent and accountable certification bodies. The assignment will also develop the legal, technical, and operational infrastructure required to license and regulate certification bodies in line with ISO/IEC 17065 and ISO 19011. In parallel, it will introduce a risk-based weighting and scoring framework that ensures transparent, evidence-based conformity assessment. Finally, the assignment will produce professional communication and promotional materials to support wide uptake of the GRMP Certification Scheme across Africa and beyond

2. Are consortium bids allowed?

Yes. The RFP allows submissions from consortiums or teams comprising multiple experts whose competencies align with the requirements of the assignment. The proposal must clearly demonstrate complementary skills and outline the specific roles and responsibilities of each team member.

3. What type of work experience evidence is required—firm-level or individual?

The firm is expected to demonstrate proven institutional experience in conducting similar assignments, while individual team members should provide reference letters or evidence of their personal experience in comparable work. Together, these elements establish confidence that both the institution and the proposed team possess the technical capacity, expertise, and track record necessary to successfully deliver the assignment.

4. What is the detailed scope of work for this assignment?

The detailed scope is described below:
  [a] Develop the Certification Scheme – will comprehensively review the existing draft and conduct structured engagement with key stakeholders, including universities, research institutions, regulatory bodies, funders, certification bodies, and professional associations, to validate, refine, and produce a final scheme that is practical and aligned with international conformity assessment best practices (e.g., ISO/IEC 17065 and ISO 19011).

[b] Establish robust governance frameworks for the Certification Scheme - will develop governance instruments for the GRMP Certification Scheme Governance Committee detailing membership criteria, roles, responsibilities, oversight functions, impartiality safeguards, mechanisms for decision-making and continuous improvement of the scheme.

[c] Develop criteria for selection and recognition of competent Certification Bodies – will articulate eligibility requirements, competence standards, quality assurance expectations, auditor qualification benchmarks, and mechanisms for monitoring & evaluating, and maintaining the performance of approved certification bodies.

[d] Develop a Certification Bodies License Agreement – will outline the legal, operational, technical, and administrative conditions under which certification

bodies will be authorized to conduct certification audits. This includes rights and obligations, adherence to scheme rules, compliance reporting, fee structures, confidentiality requirements, impartiality provisions, use of marks, and suspension or termination conditions.

[e] Produce high-quality promotional and communication materials – design marketing and sensitization materials for the uptake of the Certification Scheme.

[f] Develop a Weighting Framework – this will introduce a systematic, quantitative, and risk-informed approach to assessing conformity with the GRMP Standard. This includes designing a structured model that weights clauses and subclauses of the GRMP standard based on criticality and establishing a scoring methodology that enables consistent, evidence-based audit decisions across all practice areas. The framework should complement the Audit Checklist and Certification Scheme by supporting transparent compliance scoring, improved risk visibility, and enhanced audit reliability, in alignment with ISO 31000 and ISO 19011 principles**.**

5. **What are the detailed deliverables of this assignment?**

Below are the detailed deliverables of this assignment

a) Inception Report
   a. Detailed understanding of the assignment
   b. Methodology and workplan
   c. Stakeholder engagement plan
   d. Timeline and key milestones
b) Two Stakeholder Validation Workshops
   a. Facilitation of two virtual validation workshops or consultations
   b. Stakeholder feedback report summarizing inputs and recommendations
   c. Updated draft Certification Scheme documents reflecting stakeholder insights
c) Criteria for Selecting GRMP Certification Bodies
d) GRMP Certification Bodies License Agreement
e) Terms of Reference for the Certification Scheme Governance Committee

 f) Final GRMP Certification Scheme Document
   a. Weighting Framework / Matrix that includes guidance notes for auditors on the application, interpretation, and integration of the framework
 g) Promotional and Communication Materials for the Certification Scheme

6. Will the SFA Foundation provide access to the draft Certification Scheme?

Yes. The consultant will be given access to the existing draft Certification Scheme developed by the SFA Foundation. These materials will be shared upon contract award to support finalization and refinement of the scheme.

7. Will the SFA Foundation provide access to the Audit Materials?

Yes. The Audit Materials will be provided to the consultant, particularly to support the development of the Weighting Framework, which must integrate seamlessly with the Audit Checklist. These materials will also be shared upon contract award.

8. What is the purpose of the GRMP Audit Checklist?

The GRMP Audit Checklist (which has been developed already) is a structured tool that guides auditors in systematically evaluating an institution's conformity with the GRMP Standard. It translates standard requirements into clear, verifiable audit questions and evidence points, ensuring accuracy, consistency, and completeness in audits. The checklist supports both certification audits and internal assessments, helping organisations identify strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement. It also forms the foundation for the Compliance Weighting Framework, which introduces a more quantitative and risk-informed scoring approach.

9. What is the Compliance Weighting Framework?

The Weighting Framework is a systematic, quantitative tool designed to enhance the assessment of conformity with the GRMP Standard. It:

- Weights clauses and subclauses based on aspects such as on governance, ethical, and operational criticality
- Prioritises and quantifies compliance risks across different practice areas
- Provides a risk-based scoring methodology for conformity and non-conformity
- Supports transparency, audit reliability, and informed decision-making

The framework must align with the GRMP Audit Checklist as well as ISO 31000 and ISO 19011 risk and audit principles.

10. Will SFA Foundation cover any additional costs such as travel?

This assignment is not expected to require travel. However, should travel become necessary, the SFA Foundation will cover associated travel costs.

11. How do the different deliverables relate to the GRMP Certification Scheme Document?

The **"Certification Scheme Document"** is the core document outlining the rules, principles, and procedures governing certification. The other deliverables(tools), such as the governance committee Terms of Reference, criteria for selecting certification bodies, license agreement, are complementary instruments that support and operationalise the scheme. Although these documents are referenced within the Certification Scheme, they are developed as standalone tools to ensure clarity, usability, and ease of implementation, avoiding an overly lengthy or congested scheme document.

ASSIGNMENT #2: TRAINING SCHEME FOR THE GOOD RESEARCH MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (GRMP) STANDARD – ARS 1054:2025

1. What are the objectives of this assignment

The objective of this assignment is to design validate a credible, scalable, and internationally aligned GRMP Training Scheme that builds high-quality professional competence in research management across Africa and globally. This will be achieved through the establishment of robust governance, accreditation, and licensing frameworks for training providers and GRMP experts in line with ISO 29993, ISO/IEC 17024, and ISO 10015. The assignment will define structured learning pathways, assessment rules, certification types, and progression routes from implementer to expert level. It will also establish transparent systems for registration, verification, and performance monitoring to safeguard the integrity of GRMP training and awards. Finally, the scheme will embed continuous monitoring, evaluation, and improvement to ensure sustained quality, credibility, and impact.

2. Are consortium bids allowed?

Yes. The RFP allows submissions from consortiums or teams comprising multiple experts whose competencies align with the requirements of the assignment. The proposal must clearly demonstrate complementary skills and outline the specific roles and responsibilities of each team member.

3. What type of work experience evidence is required—firm-level or individual?

The firm is expected to demonstrate proven institutional experience in conducting similar assignments, while individual team members should provide reference letters or evidence of their personal experience in comparable work. Together, these elements establish confidence that both the institution and the proposed team possess the technical capacity, expertise, and track record necessary to

successfully deliver the assignment.

4. Will the SFA Foundation provide access to the draft GRMP Training Scheme?

Yes. The consultant will be given access to the existing draft GRMP Training Scheme developed by the SFA Foundation. These materials will be shared upon contract award to support finalization and refinement of the scheme.

5. Will the SFA Foundation identify stakeholders to be engaged for the validation workshops?

Yes. The SFA Foundation will identify, invite, and introduce the relevant stakeholders to the consultant. The consultant will be responsible for preparing concise presentations and materials to facilitate meaningful engagement and to obtain critical feedback and insights on key aspects of the training scheme and its accompanying tools.

6. Will SFA Foundation cover any additional costs such as travel?

This assignment is not expected to require travel. However, should travel become necessary, the SFA Foundation will cover associated travel costs.

7. How do the different deliverables relate to the GRMP Training Scheme Document?

The GRMP Training Scheme Document serves as the core framework outlining the structure, requirements, and operational rules for delivering robust GRMP training. The accompanying deliverables, such as competency requirements, assessment tools, Training Service Providers licensing framework, and accompanying guidance materials, are complementary instruments designed to operationalise the scheme. While these tools are referenced within the Training Scheme Document, they are developed as standalone resources to ensure clarity, usability, and effective implementation, and to prevent the main scheme document from becoming overly lengthy or complex.

8. What is the detailed scope of work for this assignment

The detailed scope is described below:

- **Develop the Training Scheme** – Will comprehensively review of the existing draft and conduct structured engagement with key stakeholders including universities, research institutions, National Standards Bodies, capacity-building organisations, funders, professional associations, and prospective training service providers, to validate, refine, and produce a final scheme that is practical, scalable, and aligned with international best practices in training governance, competence development, and accreditation frameworks (e.g., ISO 29993, ISO/IEC 17024, and ISO 10015).

- **Develop a detailed governance framework** – Develop an instrument to articulate responsibilities for reference material development, document control, licensing, surveillance, data management, complaints and appeals handling, and continuous improvement mechanisms. The framework will also define the mandate and composition Governance Committee ensuring multistakeholder oversight, independence, structured decision-making, and alignment with quality assurance principles.

- **Develop criteria for licensing and approval -** Develop requirements, licensing and approval processes for training service providers. This will**cover** the competences, governance systems, training delivery standards, assessment integrity controls, reporting obligations, surveillance activities, and renewal processes.

- **Develop Guidance Document –** To define course types, learning outcomes, assessment rules, and certification pathways**,** such as short courses, implementer programmes, and advanced certificates, delivered in partnership with accredited higher education institutions. Note: These will be based on GRMP training materials and manuals already developed.

- **Develop a certificates framework –** Will define types of certificates and determine validity periods, Continuous Professional Development requirements, branding rules, verification processes, and measures to safeguard the integrity of awards issued under the scheme.

- **Establish an Accreditation framework –** Develop criterion for GRMP Experts that includes eligibility, competences, assessment methods, grades of recognition (Implementer, Lead Implementer, Assessor, Trainer), surveillance , renewal conditions, and governance of the directory.

- Develop the systems and processes required to maintain a public register of approved training service providers, accredited experts, course runs, and certificates issued, ensuring transparency, traceability, and authenticity.

- Integrate mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and learning for the training scheme with KPIs, audits, annual performance reviews, and scheme revisions.

9. **What are the detailed deliverables of this assignment?**

Below are the detailed deliverables of this assignment

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- **Inception Report**

  - Detailed understanding of the assignment
  - Methodology and workplan
  - Stakeholder engagement plan
  - Timeline and key milestones

- **Stakeholder Validation Workshops**

  - Facilitation of two virtual validation workshops or consultations
  - Stakeholder feedback report summarizing inputs and recommendations
  - Updated draft Training Scheme documents reflecting stakeholder insights

- **Governance Tools**

  - Terms of Reference for the GRMP Training Scheme Governance Committee (TSGC)
  - Governance and administrative procedures for the Scheme Owner

- **Training Service Provider (TSP) Framework**

  - Requirements and criteria for selecting, approving, licensing, and monitoring Training Service Providers
  - Templates and tools for TSP application, evaluation, licensing, surveillance, and renewal

- **GRMP Course Framework**

  - Finalized structure for course types (e.g Awareness, Implementer, Lead Implementer, Special Topics, Diploma pathways)
  - Learning outcomes, assessment requirements, certificate rules, validity periods, and CPD/refresher provisions

- **GRMP Expert Accreditation Framework**

  - Eligibility requirements, competence criteria, assessment methods, and grades of accreditation
  - Processes for application, evaluation, recognition, surveillance, renewal, and listing in the directory of GRMP Experts.

- **Final GRMP Training Scheme Document**

A complete, publication-ready training scheme that includes:
  - Scheme overview, governance model, licensing system, quality assurance mechanisms
  - TSP requirements, course rules, assessment procedures, accreditation framework, and complaint/appeals processes

- **Promotional and Communication Materials for the GRMP Training Scheme**

  - Brochure or infographic describing the Training Scheme
  - Awareness PowerPoint deck
  - A simple, user-friendly guide on how to participate in or deliver GRMP training

Note: All materials must be delivered in **high-quality, fully editable formats**.

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