



RFP/002/2026

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

JANUARY 2025

1.0 Introduction

The Science for Africa Foundation (SFA Foundation) is a pan-African, non-profit, and public charity organisation that supports, strengthens, and promotes science and innovation in Africa. The SFA Foundation is committed to improving African people's quality of life and promoting research uptake in communities, industry, and the public sector. We serve the African research ecosystem by designing, funding, and managing programmes that support excellent science and innovation; and that build and reinforce environments that are conducive for scientists to thrive and produce quality research that impacts development.

2.0 Background

The Research Management Capacity Strengthening (REMACS) Programme, implemented by the SFA Foundation, is designed to address critical gaps within the African research ecosystem and to cultivate a vibrant research culture and strong leadership across research institutions. The Programme aims to build the expertise required to establish and sustain robust research enterprises, strengthen institutional systems, and enhance the overall performance of research environments across the continent. REMACS focuses on overcoming systemic challenges that hinder the development of effective and sustainable research management systems. Its interventions are organized around three core pillars:

1. **Institutional Development** – Strengthening institutional systems, standards, governance frameworks, research impact mechanisms, and long-term sustainability.
2. **Professional Development** – Building the capacity of research managers through structured career pathways, training, mentorship, recognition programmes, and knowledge management platforms toward a professionalised research management ecosystem.
3. **Enabling Environment** – Supporting national research systems by engaging regulatory agencies, government departments, National Councils for Science and Technology, Science Granting Councils, and higher education networks to create a supportive ecosystem for research and innovation.

As part of its mandate, the REMACS Programme is responsible for leading the uptake, implementation, and institutionalisation of the Good Research Management Practice Standard across Africa and globally, ensuring that research organisations have the tools, competencies, and enabling environment required to meet international standards of research governance and excellence.

2.1 Introduction to the Good Research Management Practice (GRMP) Standard-ARS 1054:2025.

The GRMP Standard was developed through a collaborative effort between the African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO) and the SFA Foundation under the REMACS Programme.

The standard was finalized, published, and officially launched on 16

October 2025, marking a significant milestone in strengthening research governance across the continent. A free-access version of the standard is available at:

<https://www.arso-oran.org/free-access-standards/>.

The GRMP Standard is the first international standard for research management, positioning Africa as a global leader in defining excellence in research governance, integrity, and operational effectiveness. It provides a structured framework that enables research-performing organisations to implement robust systems, strengthen accountability, and enhance research quality and impact.

To facilitate widespread uptake and effective implementation of the standard, the SFA Foundation is leading the development of several supporting tools and instruments, including, a Certification Scheme. This is a comprehensive framework for auditing and certifying institutions that demonstrate compliance with the GRMP Standard and successfully integrate it into their research operations.

Further information on the GRMP Standard is available at:

<https://scienceforafrica.foundation/media-center/africa-launches-worlds-first-good-research-management-practice-standard>

3.0 Objectives of the Assignment

We are seeking consultancy services from a competent firm to deliver two assignments with distinct objectives as follows:

1. **Assignment #1: Development of GRMP Certification Scheme:** To design and validate a scalable, internationally credible GRMP Certification Scheme that ensures consistent, impartial, and risk-based certification of organizations' compliance with the GRMP Standard, supported by robust governance arrangements, accredited certification bodies, and alignment with ISO/IEC 17065 and ISO 19011.
2. **Assignment #2: Development of GRMP Training Scheme:** To design and validate a scalable, internationally aligned GRMP Training Scheme that builds professional and common understanding of GRMP requirements through structured learning pathways, accredited training providers and GRMP experts, and quality-assured assessment and accreditation systems aligned with ISO 29993, ISO/IEC 17024, and ISO 10015.

4.0 Scope of Work:

Assignment #1

1. Develop the Certification Scheme document
2. Establish robust governance frameworks for the Certification Scheme
3. Develop criteria for selection and recognition of competent Certification Bodies
4. Develop a Certification Bodies License Agreement
5. Produce high-quality promotional and communication materials
6. Develop a Weighting Framework

Assignment #2

- Develop the Training Scheme document
- Develop a detailed governance framework
- Develop criteria for licensing and approval of training service

- providers
- Develop guidance document
- Develop a certificates framework
- Establish an accreditation framework
- Develop the systems and processes for the global public register
- Develop mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation, and learning

Further details on the scope of work are provided in the RFP Clarifications and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) attached to this RFP.

5.0 Deliverables

1. Inception reports
2. Final Certification Scheme Documents
 - Scheme Governance Framework
 - Certification Bodies Selection and Recognition Criterion
 - License Agreement for certification bodies
 - Weighting Framework / Matrix
3. Final Training Scheme Documents
 - Scheme Governance Framework
 - Licensing and Approval Framework for service providers
 - Course Certifications and Guidance Framework
 - Expert Accreditation Framework
4. Promotion and communication materials (two sets)
5. Two validation workshops

Note: All materials MUST be delivered in high-quality editable formats.

Further details on the deliverables are provided in the RFP Clarifications and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) attached to this RFP.

6.0 Duration of the Assignment

The consultancy assignment is expected to be completed over a period of **9 months**. Key milestones and deliverable due dates will be agreed upon during the inception phase.

7.0 Required Technical Competencies

[a]. Auditing and Certification Experience

Proven experience in developing audit and certification schemes to confirm compliance with international or national standards (e.g., ISO, ARSO). Experience in standards auditing and certification will be an added advantage.

[b]. Training Schemes Development Experience

- Proven experience in developing training schemes, competency framework and accreditation systems (e.g., ISO 29993, ISO/IEC 17024, NQF/EQF-aligned frameworks). Experience designing governance and quality assurance structures for training schemes, including licensing rules, surveillance mechanisms, assessment integrity controls, and trainer standardization processes.
- Proven experience in developing learning outcomes, assessment

methods, CPD/refreshers requirements, and certification criteria for training programmes. Ability to design tools, templates, and processes for evaluating trainers and accredited experts

[c].Experience and knowledge of Research Management

Demonstrated experience in research management and research governance strengthening.

[d].Marketing and Communication Materials Development

Experience in developing marketing and promotional materials. Ability to develop high-quality training content, promotional materials, guides, and learner-friendly documentation.

[e].Stakeholder Engagement and Facilitation

Experience engaging diverse stakeholders and facilitating consultations. Experience working with diverse organisations especially academic and non-profits organisations.

8.0 Confidentiality

All information obtained during the assignment shall be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used solely for this assignment.

9.0 RFP Timelines

Table 1

Action	Date
Circulation of RFP	22nd January 2026
Deadline for receipt of questions relating to the RFP and confirmation of participation	27th January 2026
Response to Vendors' Queries	30th January 2026
Deadline for submission of the proposals	9th February 2026
Project start date	After issuance of the contract

10.0 Proposal Submission Requirements

Consultants are requested to submit a proposal containing:

- Approach and Methodology:** Description of the proposed methodology, project approach, tools, and previous similar assignments (not more than 10 pages).
- Detailed work plan:** Detailed timelines mapping the deliverables.
- Team Composition:** Names and roles of the project team members, highlighting their qualifications and experiences in past projects. Team members should have the required competences as described in section 4 of this RFP.
- Budget:** Detailed budget breakdown including fees and any anticipated expenses.
- References:** At least three references from clients with evidence of successful

similar assignments and good standing.

11.0 Evaluation Criteria

Interested firms should submit:

i. Technical Proposal:

- Consultant profile and contact details
- Methodology and work plan.
- Team composition and CVs of key personnel.
- Examples of recent similar assignments in nature and complexity.

ii. Financial Proposal: Detailed cost breakdown (e.g., fees, daily rates, travel expenses etc).

iii. References: Contact details for at least three previous clients.

11.1 Mandatory Evaluation

The mandatory evaluation shall be conducted based on the below criteria. Any bidder who does not meet the mandatory requirements will be disqualified from proceeding to technical evaluation.

Table 2: Mandatory Criteria

Mandatory Requirements of the Bidder
a) Tax compliance certificate and PIN Certificate - if Kenyan and where applicable.
b) Evidence of having conducted similar assignments. (provide recommendation letters stating the similar assignment done)
c) Registration with relevant bodies (where applicable)

11.2 Technical Evaluation * (Weight 80%)

Only bidders who meets all mandatory requirements will proceed to technical evaluation stage. The evaluation will be based on the below criteria.

Table 3: Technical Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Weighted Percentage
Approach, Methodology, and workplan.	30%
Previous similar assignments and at least three (3) references/recommendations	15%
The project lead must demonstrate experience in project management Team composition competences <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conformity Assessment (Audit and certification)• Development of training schemes• Research Management• Development of promotional materials• Stakeholder engagement	30%
Value addition	5%
Total Scores out of 80	80%
Minimum Score (64/80)	

Bidders must attain a pass mark of 64% to be considered for the next steps.

11.3 Financial Scores (Weight 20%)

Only bidders who will attain the minimum technical scores requirement will be considered for Financial Analysis.

Table 4: Financial Criteria

Criteria	Score
Cost and Value (20%) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost-effectiveness and value for money based on the proposed budget, with a clear breakdown of fees by project phase.• Justification of costs, ensuring alignment with the scope of work and expected deliverables.• Competitive pricing that aligns with industry standards for Grantee External Audit services.	20 marks

11.4 Determination of the Winning Bidder

The winning bidder shall be determined based on the combined scores for Technical and Financial scores as per the below formula:

Final Score (FS)= TS x T% + FS x F%,

where T% + F% shall always be equal to 100%.

- *Final Score (FS) is the total combined scores of Technical and Financial scores.*
- *T% is the weighting given to the technical proposal.*
- *F% is the weighting given to the financial proposal*

T% shall be 80% and F% shall be 20% respectively

The bidder with the highest combined scores shall be considered for negotiations for the award.

The best bidders as outlined above may further be invited for presentation on their proposals for further decision making.

12. Terms and Conditions

This document contains proprietary and confidential information. Bidders may use or reproduce the information detailed within this document and any other supporting information only to provide a response to this request for proposal. No commitment will be made to any bidder unless a contract has been awarded and signed by both parties.

SFA Foundation reserves the right to cease this exercise at any time. During the period of this activity, no contact should occur between any members of the bidder's staff and SFA Foundation staff in relation to this exercise other than through the designated contact points as detailed within this request for proposal. It is however recognised that pre-existing relationships if any, will be respected.

13.0 Ethics

Bidders are required to observe our procurement ethical code of conduct which includes but is not limited to observing the highest standard of ethics regarding corruption, collusion, conflict of interest, and fraud. If the bidder does not observe confidentiality or ethical practices, they shall be disqualified from any future work.

14.0 Non-Disclosure and Confidentiality

The information contained within this document or subsequently made available to the bidders is deemed confidential and must not be disclosed without prior written consent unless required by law.

15.0 Independent Proposal

By submitting a proposal, the bidder warrants that the fees in the proposal have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, agreement or understanding for the purpose of restricting competition as to any matter relating to such fees, with any other potential bidder or with any competitor.

16.0 Proposal Submission Process

It should be noted that this document relates to a request for proposal only and not a commitment to enter into a contractual agreement. In addition, SFA Foundation will not be held responsible for any costs associated with the production of a response to this request for proposal.

Instructions on the Proposal Submission Process

1. Proposal to be sent by email to procurement@scienceforafrica.foundation on or before 9th February 2026 at 5.00 pm (EAT)
2. Protect your proposal with a password and share the password on 10th February 2026 by 8.00 am (EAT)
3. The proposal to be marked as follows on the subject line:

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SERVICES TO DEVELOP CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING SCHEMES
FOR THE GOOD RESEARCH MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (GRMP)
STANDARD-ARS 1054:2025**